00083199

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-1.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 17 February, 2016

ESSAYS

ON THE

Literature, Superstitions, and History

OF

ENGLAND IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

ESSAYS

ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE

LITERATURE, POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS,

AND

HISTORY

OF

England in the Middle Ages.

BY

THOMAS WRIGHT, M.A. F.S.A.

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE, ETC.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE
(ACADÉMIE DES INSCRIPTIONS ET BELLES LETTRES.)

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

83169
ae

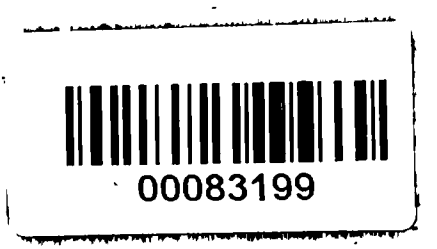
LONDON :

JOHN RUSSELL SMITH,

4, OLD COMPTON STREET, SOHO SQUARE.

MDCCCXLVI.

824
wxi/ESS
83199



TO

HUDSON GURNEY, Esq., F.R.S. V.P.S.A.

&c. &c. &c.

These little Volumes

ARE VERY RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

TO HUDSON GURNEY, ESQ.

&c. &c. &c.

DEAR SIR,

I feel much diffidence in venturing to offer to your experienced judgment the Essays which, originally written at different periods and entirely unconnected with each other, I have revised and collected together in the following pages. Most of them have appeared several years ago anonymously in different periodicals;* and they were composed much less with the design of being proof against the severer criticism of the learned, than of helping to spread a more general taste for the study of the literature and history of our forefathers in the middle ages, and of showing that antiquarianism was not necessarily that dry pursuit which it has too often been made to appear by

* The Adventures of Hereward have appeared more recently in Ainsworth's Magazine, and the essay on popular stories in a late number of the Foreign Quarterly Review.

the form in which it was presented to the world. It is under this character alone that I dare hope for your approbation.

I have arranged these Essays so as to give, as far as can be done in a series of papers not originally composed with that intention, a connected view of the subjects on which they treat. They relate as a whole more especially to the literature and history of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, or to subjects which may be traced back to that early period, although their influence has been felt down to much later times. Those which form the larger portion of the first volume are intended to give to general readers a popular view of the character of the literature of our island during the period alluded to, and I earnestly hope that they may encourage them to pursue further a study which I have ever found instructive as well as pleasing. This appeared also the proper place for a historical essay on the proverbs which occur so frequently in our early popular literature.

The second division consists of essays on popular mythology and superstitions,—a field of research no less generally interesting than the former, and in which little has really been done in England. An essay on modern Greek superstitions has been introduced to afford the means of comparing the vulgar creed of the West with that of a country with which [illegible] Christians had much intercourse during the middle ages.

The history of romance and of the transmission of popular stories follows naturally after that of mythology, for both are equally connected with the literature of the age. The influence of these poetical creations on medieval history is also a subject of some importance; and the deeds of Hereward, and Eustace, and Fulke fitz Warine, lead us naturally to the adventures of a less real personage, but who perhaps for that reason has obtained a wider and more lasting renown—the popular hero Robin Hood.

The remaining essays are devoted to a sketch of the history of the conquest of Ireland by the Anglo-Normans, founded in part on documents which had not previously been used; and to that class of popular effusions which exhibit the political passions by which the history of former days has been often as much distorted as by actual fable.

Thus the two volumes which I have presumed to dedicate to you, give a tolerably complete, though necessarily slight, picture of the middle ages taken in one point of view. I have endeavoured to paint the spirit and manners of the age truly: concealing none of what appeared to me to be its beauties or its excellencies on the one hand, nor on the other hiding those great vices in the texture of society, and defects in the medieval system, which ought to make us look back upon it with thankfulness as an age that has long passed away.

In the hope that you will look upon these effusions with an indulgent eye, and the conviction that you will approve of the object with which they were composed, I take this opportunity of begging that you will believe with how much sincere respect and esteem for those high qualities of learning and benevolence which have so long endeared your name to the antiquaries of this country, I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

THOMAS WRIGHT.

LONDON; *Jan.* 1845.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

PAGE

ESSAY I.

ANGLO-SAXON POETRY 1

II.

ANGLO-NORMAN POETRY 31

III.

CHANSONS DE GESTE, OR HISTORICAL ROMANCES OF THE MIDDLE AGES 72

IV.

ON PROVERBS AND POPULAR SAYINGS . . . 124

V.

ON THE ANGLO-LATIN POETS OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY 176

PAGE

VI.

ABELARD AND THE SCHOLASTIC PHILOSOPHY 218

VII.

ON DR. GRIMM'S GERMAN MYTHOLOGY 237

VIII.

ON THE NATIONAL FAIRY MYTHOLOGY OF ENGLAND . 258

IX.

ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF MODERN GREECE 283

ESSAYS

ON THE

LITERATURE, ETC. OF ENGLAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

ESSAY I.

ANGLO-SAXON POETRY.

FROM the time when the Anglo-Saxon language sank into English, perhaps we may say from the latter part of the twelfth century, the pure Saxon writings could no longer be understood, and the manuscripts written in that language were regarded as little better than lumber: they were suffered to lie on the shelves of monastic libraries, for want of better books to occupy their place, and, as opportunity occurred, were often erased, and a Latin treatise on some then more valuable and interesting subject written on the same parchment. We have an instance of this latter practice in a manuscript in the library of Jesus College, Cambridge; where, beneath the Latin decretals which now occupy it, and particularly round the margins of some of the folios, may be traced the remains of a fine copy of Alfric's Saxon sermons. It has not unfrequently happened that valuable Saxon books have been preserved by the circumstance of the same manuscript containing

Latin books which were considered much more precious by the monks to whom they belonged. It is not improbable that sometimes the monks were induced, by the fact of their possessing such books, to study as far as they were able the older form of their language; the glossary, Latin and Saxon, with Alfric's Saxon grammar of the Latin language, are common manuscripts, and might give them some assistance; and we are somewhere told that the monks of Tavistock had composed, and even printed, an Anglo-Saxon grammar.

Public attention, however, was first drawn to the writings of the Anglo-Saxons at the time of the reformation, on account of the religious opinions which they contained. It is now well known that the Saxons did not hold many of the most objectionable doctrines which afterwards distinguished the Romish church, and which were opposed by the reformers, and have been rejected by our own church. On the contrary, the Saxon theologians preached against some of these doctrines, as being then growing heresies. Thus their writings became a valuable weapon against the Romish argument of antiquity. The Saxons had also translated the Scriptures into the vernacular tongue; a precedent which the reformers greedily seized upon. Accordingly, the celebrated John Foxe, who had already published some extracts from Alfric, and the whole of the homily against transubstantiation, printed, in 1571, the Saxon gospels, with an English version. In 1623, William L'Isle printed Alfric's 'Saxon Treatise concerning the Old and New Testament,' and his 'Sermon of the Paschall Lambe;' the latter of which was considered of such importance that its genuineness was attested by the signatures of fifteen English archbishops and bishops, among

whom was archbishop Parker, the great patron of Saxon literature. In the preface to the first of these tracts, L'Isle complains bitterly of the neglect with which the Anglo-Saxon monuments had been treated; "having," he says, "in our libraries so goodly monuments of reverend antiquitie, divine handwritings, in so faire and large character that a man running may read them: we do not make them known to the world, but let them lie still like a treasure hid to no use, and even till they be almost forgotten of our selves." L'Isle by no means overpraises the beautiful writing which is generally characteristic of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. His account of the circuitous path by which he arrived at what knowledge he had of the language is extremely curious, and shows clearly how little progress had then been made towards rescuing it from oblivion.

"The due consideration hereof," says he, "first stirred vp in me an earnest desire to know what learning lay hid in this old English tongue: for which I found out this vneasie way, first to acquaint my selfe a little with the Dutch, both High and Low; the one by originall, the other by commerce allied: then to reade awhile for recreation all the old English I could finde, poetry or prose, of what matter soeuer. And diuers good bookes of this kinde I got, that were neuer yet published in print; which euer the more ancient they were, I perceiued came neerer the Saxon; but the Saxon (as a bird, flying in the aire farther and farther, seemes lesse and lesse), the older it was, became the harder to bee vnderstood."

After a while, he met with the translation of Virgil by Gawin Douglas, which he read through more than once.

"Next then I read the decalogue, &c., set out by Fraerus in common character, and so prepared came to the proper

Saxon; which differeth but in seuen or eight letters from the pica roman: and therein reading certaine sermons, and the foure euangelists set out and Englished by Mr. Fox, so increased my skill, that at length (I thanke God) I found my selfe able (as it were to swimme without bladders) to vnderstand the vntranslated fragments of the tongue scattered in master Camden and others, by him some, and some by Sir Henry Savill set forth: as also those in Tho. of Walsingham, Caius, and Lambard; with certaine old charters that I met with among the king's records, and in the coucher-bookes of monasteries; yet still ventring not far from the shore. At last, waxing more able through vse, I tooke heart to put forth and diue into the deep among the meere Saxon monuments of my worthily-respected kinsman Sir H. Spelman, my honourable friend Sir Rob. Cotton, and of our libraries in Cambridge. So far about went I for want of a guide, who now (thanks be to God) am able to lead others a neerer way."

L'Isle's confessions show us how much was wanting, and how long time must unavoidably elapse, before the study of the Anglo-Saxon language could be pursued safely and boldly. Even the opportunity for this study was but a matter of chance; for every one was not in that position where he could use freely and at will the manuscripts in which the monuments of that language lie buried. And to those who were in that position it was a difficult and a wearisome task, where the scholar was without help and without guide, and in which he was constantly meeting with phraseology and words at the meaning of which he could do no more than guess. Yet the seventeenth century gave birth to many zealous promoters of the study of the old language and literature of our ances-

tors; and the Thesaurus of Hickes will always remain a monument of industry and learning, though too full of errors to be a guide at the present day. The same century produced Wheloc, who gave an edition of Alfred's version of Bede; Junius, to whom we owe the first edition of Cædmon; Spelman, who edited the laws and constitutions; Wanley, who composed a descriptive catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts which in his time were preserved in the libraries, public and private, of England; Somner, who compiled an Anglo-Saxon dictionary; Gibson, who edited the Chronicle. During the following century, if we except one or two names who deserve better fame, the Anglo-Saxon language again fell into neglect, and was generally looked upon as a mere *virtuoso* affair—a thing worthy only to amuse now and then the idler hours of the antiquary. It has been reserved for our own days, and (to our shame be it spoken) for foreigners, to revive the study of a language which must, on so many accounts, be interesting to Englishmen.

It would not be difficult to point at several causes which would tend to discourage the study of Anglo-Saxon during the last century and the commencement of the present. The scholars of the seventeenth century had laboured zealously, and had done much work, but unfortunately they had been working on a wrong track. In the comparatively small number of books in the language which these scholars had the opportunity of reading diligently, out of those which were preserved, it often happened that they found words and forms and constructions which only occurred once; and nothing in philology is more perilous than forming rules upon single instances. The consequence was, that though grammars and dictionaries were published,

though they reflected credit on the industry, and often on the acuteness, of those who composed them, yet they were so full of errors that they led the student into the greatest of mistakes, even to the mistaking of nouns for verbs, or of particles for nouns; and when he met with any serious difficulty, he was obliged to grope his way out of it by his own ingenuity, as well as he could. This itself was no small discouragement, even had the editions of Saxon authors, and the grammars and dictionaries made to assist in reading them, been sufficiently numerous to have given people in general an opportunity of using them.

From the circumstance of the Anglo-Saxon being a language only existing in manuscripts, which manuscripts bear the strongest marks of having been written by ignorant and careless copyists; and, from the additional circumstance of the largest part of them being theological, and of such a kind as to run chiefly upon a particular class of words, and on a particular style of writing, it may be easily imagined that the person who should undertake to reduce its philology into order, to form a grammar and dictionary of a language which no one understood, attempted a task of some difficulty. The manner in which William L'Isle sought to attain a knowledge of the language by mounting up to it through the middle English and Scottish, might teach him the meaning of some of the commoner words, but it could never have taught him the niceties or the difficulties of the grammar and construction; he might, indeed, by this means, and by his knowledge of the Dutch and German, have succeeded in translating one of the later homilies; but he could never have gone much further without some better and surer aid.

Our Saxonists soon felt the necessity of making a comparison with the other tongues of the same stock of languages; but they made this comparison without knowing exactly what they were doing; they went sometimes to one language to seek a word, sometimes to another, without knowing why that word in that language must be the representative of the same word, or why not. It was like the aim of a blind man—he may chance to hit his mark, or he may chance to miss it; but the latter chance is the greater. The difference in the form of a word in two languages of the same family, or in two dialects of the same language, is guided by a rule, which is invariable, and which can only be discovered in its bearing on every instance by a laborious collation of all the cases where it is exerted. This being once done, the rule is fixed. The dialect which substitutes *o* for the *a* of another dialect in such a word as *man*, would not, in another case, where *a* stood under exactly the same circumstances, replace it by *i*.

Rask did much for Anglo-Saxon, by comparing it with the Icelandic; and his Anglo-Saxon grammar is an excellent book. But he has fallen into errors by working within too narrow a field, by having compared the Saxon with only one cognate language, and that not the nearest in relationship to itself. It was Dr. James Grimm, of Göttingen, who first established a correct and safe system of philology for the Teutonic languages; and it is by an application of this system only that we can proceed in the Anglo-Saxon with any degree of security.

The necessity of this exact and complete knowledge of the different cognate languages must be very apparent. For instance: if we would know the gender of a noun a

thing very necessary to be ascertained, as it guides us in knowing its inflexion, it is frequently the case that we cannot ascertain it from the most complete examination of the manuscripts which we now have, where it may never occur in that position which would determine it; and hence we might be led into the error of confusing one case of the noun with another. Here, then, we are obliged to examine its analogous word in another language of the family. But in this other language, an accurate examination of the analogy of that form of words may, perhaps, in a few instances, still leave some doubt; and we are then driven to seek the analogy in another language of the same stock, which shall give us all we want, and, at the same time, will explain to us the cause of the doubt in the other, and thus save us from the error which we should have committed by confining ourselves to it.

To know the grammar of a language it is necessary to know the reasons of the grammar. It is not sufficient to know the forms of words, but we ought to know why such forms existed, and why in their place we do not find some other forms. This is the single basis on which is founded what has been termed the *new school* of Saxon philologists. The reasons of language are not always to be discovered in the language itself; we must necessarily refer to other languages of the same family; but we must know how and why we are referring to them, and, above all, we must avoid being deceived by following hastily false analogies. But nothing could be more dangerous, or more vain, than to establish a system of philology for the Anglo-Saxon language solely on the language itself as it exists in manuscripts. We may instance this in the case of the accents, in which the scribes have been accu-

liarly careless. We often find in a manuscript, within the same page, almost in the same line, the same word occurring twice, accentuated in the one place, and without accent in the other. What is worse, the scribes not only omitted accents, but they often accentuated words wrongly.* The accents evidently distinguish the long vowels from the short ones; and here, if we rely upon the manuscripts, we must come to the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that the vowels might in every case be long or short, at the caprice of the writer. Several thousand instances of accentuation have, to our knowledge, been collected from manuscripts *alone*, and compared most carefully; they led to the conclusion that, in this case, the authority of the manuscripts can nowise be depended

* In some Latin manuscripts of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries, as in a life of St. Oswin, MS. Cotton, Julius, A. X., we find the scribe accentuating the long vowels, as in the Saxon, and without any more care or accuracy. The light which the study of the Latin manuscripts throws upon these matters is by no means to be despised. The rule now adopted in the use of the Saxon letters þ and ð, which is founded principally on the authority of good manuscripts, is that the former should stand at the beginning of a word, the latter in the middle, or at the end. The sound of þ is like that of *th* in the English word *thin;* that of ð is the sound of the *th* in the word *there;* and as those sounds are to each other as the sounds of *t* and *d*, the two letters are very well represented by *th* and *dh*. The rule we have just mentioned applies of course only to the pure West Saxon—in the dialect of Durham the þ seems not to have been used—we find in its manuscripts only the ð, and in the above-mentioned Latin life of St. Oswin its sound is represented generally by *dh*, sometimes by *dth*, as Nordhanymbrorum and Nordthanymbrorum, for Norðanymbrorum; Tynemudha and Tynemudtha, for Tynemuða. The use of the letter ð was discontinued early in the thirteenth century—that of þ was continued to a very late period, at which it is often taken for a *y*.

upon. But it is very necessary that we should know which are long vowels, and which are short,—that is, in every word we ought to know the accentuation; for this purpose we compare, according to rules which are now well established, the syllable with the same syllable in the form of the word which the other Teutonic languages give, and all is clear. We may illustrate this by a very common instance. In our dictionaries hitherto we have the word God explained *God* and also *good* (bonus); and, again, the word man explained by *man* and *evil*. Our lexicographers, thereupon, give us a lecture upon the philosophy of the Anglo-Saxons (of course when they made their language), when they wisely designated the deity by a name which expressed his *goodness*, and at the same time expressed their sense of the natural wickedness and depravity of their own species by a name that signified *evil*. But the Anglo-Saxons were not so humble-minded. The truth is that God, *Deus*, and gód, *bonus*—for the latter should be accentuated—are entirely different words, as are also man, *homo*, and mán, *scelus*. This truth appears at once by a comparison of the languages. God, *Deus*, has in Gothic the form guths, in what we call Old High-Dutch it is kot, in Old-Saxon god, and in Old-Norse gudr; in all which cases the vowel answers to a short vowel in Anglo-Saxon: whereas, gód, *bonus*, is represented in Gothic by gôds, in Old-High-Dutch by kuot, in Old-Saxon by gód, and in Old-Norse by gôdr; all which forms show the vowel of the Saxon word to be long. So man, *homo*, is represented in Gothic by mann, manna, in Old-High-Dutch by man, in Old Saxon by man, and in Old-Norse by madr (for manr); while mán, *scelus*, is máins in Gothic, mein in Old-High-Dutch, mên in Old Saxon, and

mein in Old-Norse. In pronouncing these words, an Anglo-Saxon would never have mistaken, in either case, the one word for the other.

As to the second difficulty which we have supposed to have been felt by the student in Anglo-Saxon, the want of books, much, also, has been done lately to supply this want. A most praiseworthy example was set by the Society of Antiquaries. In the beginning of the year 1831, it was proposed to undertake the publication "of the remains of Anglo-Saxon and early English literature existing in manuscript, with the addition of such as have been imperfectly edited, or have become extremely rare."

The Antiquaries commenced their undertaking with spirit; and in the following year appeared the excellent edition of Cædmon, with a literal version in English, by Benjamin Thorpe, who was already well and favorably known by his translation of Rask's *Anglo-Saxon Grammar*. At the same time was announced, for the second work of the series, the *Semi-Saxon Metrical Chronicle*, by Layamon to be edited by Sir Frederick Madden. We may perhaps complain, and not unreasonably, that, in their selection of works for publication, the Saxon Committee proceeded with more zeal than judgment. It might have been expected that the first two publications would have been Beowulf and the Exeter Book,—without doubt the two most valuable remains of Anglo-Saxon literature, and at the same time the most neglected, probably because they were the most difficult. Layamon's Chronicle has not yet made its appearance, but a valuable edition of the Exeter Book, accompanied like Cædmon with a translation, has been published under the care of Mr. Thorpe.

The neglect which Beowulf had experienced at the hands of the Antiquaries was amply repaired by the edition which was given by Mr. Kemble, and of which a second edition was subsequently published, with a second volume, containing a glossary, a literal translation of the poem, and a few philological notes.

Soon after the publication of the first edition of Beowulf, appeared Mr. Thorpe's *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*, a book long wanted by the student in that language. It consists of a selection of pieces in prose and verse, which have hitherto been unpublished, or published incorrectly, and contains among other things of value, two or three complete homilies, the prose dialogue of Saturn and Salomon, the colloquy of Alfric, and the poems of Byrhtnoth and Judith, with the history of king Lear, as a specimen of the two texts of Layamon's Chronicle; and it is accompanied by a complete glossary, so that some knowledge of the grammar is all that is necessary before reading it. This may be obtained from a very good and useful manual now published by Mr. Vernon; and Dr. Bosworth's Dictionary has placed the study of the Anglo-Saxon language within the reach of everybody. Mr. Thorpe also gave a neat edition of the Saxon prose version of the romance of Apollonius of Tyre, which is preserved in a manuscript at Cambridge; with an English translation and glossary of all the words not found in the glossary to the *Analecta*.

The limits within which we must necessarily confine our observations on the poetry of the Anglo-Saxons will not allow us to say much of their prose writings,—they are numerous, frequently not very interesting, yet often filled with noble sentiments, and acute observations. First, both for elegance and purity of language, stand the

works of Alfred, which, as they remain to us, consist chiefly of translations, sometimes (as in the case of the Pastorale of Gregory, as yet unprinted) of authors who are not now very valuable, but always in his manner of paraphrasing the original, and in his own observations, which are by no means sparingly interspersed, showing us how the great and noble mind of our king improved everything on which he put his hand. The more valuable of the Anglo-Saxon prose writings are now in the course of being given to the public by the *Alfric Society*.

The characteristics of Anglo-Saxon poetry may be described in a few words—they are loftiness of expression, exuberance of metaphor, intricacy of construction, and a diction differing entirely from that of prose—precisely the characteristics of the poetry of a people whose mind is naturally poetical, but which has not arrived at a state of cultivation and refinement. Similies, on the contrary, are rare; in the whole poem of Beowulf there occur but five, and those are of the simplest description,—the comparison of a ship, as it makes its way over the deep, to a bird (fugle ge-lícost, *l.* 435),—of the gleam that shone from the eye of the grendel, as he stalked the hall in search of his prey, to fire (ligge gelícost, *l.* 1447), of the nails of the monster's fingers to steel (style gelícost, *l.* 1964),—of the light within the grendel's den to the calm sunshine,—

"(Efne swá of hefene
hádre scíneð
rodores candel."—(*l.* 3141.)

"Even as from heaven
serenely shines
the candle of the firmament.")

—of the melting of the hero's sword by the touch of the monster's blood to that of ice (íse ge-lícost, *l.* 3216). To feel this poetry, it is necessary that we should understand well the language, and that we should also be acquainted

with the character of the people; we can know nothing of it by *literal* translations into our form of the language, which has so long lost all its grammatical inflexions, or by the translation of poetical words into the most prosaic that we can find to answer to them.

It may be well to remark that the form of Saxon poetry is alliteration—not rhyme; that, instead of two lines always rhyming together, they are joined by the circumstance of the first containing two words commencing with the same letter, and the second having its first word on which stress is laid in the pronunciation also beginning with the same letter. This is the strict rule of alliteration; in the Saxon poetry, however, as it is preserved in manuscripts, the first line often contains but one alliterating word, and, from the negligence of the scribes, the alliteration is in many instances entirely lost. As far as we are able to judge, the Saxons did not measure their verse by feet; the only rule we can discover seems to be that, in the common kind of verse, there must be two raisings and two fallings of the voice in each line,—so that it would appear that a verse ought never to consist of less than four syllables.

The Saxon bards seem to have possessed most of inspiration while their countrymen retained their paganism. We trace distinctly two periods of their poetry,—a period when it was full of freedom, and originality, and genius, and a later time, when the poets were imitators, who made their verse by freely using the thoughts and expressions of those who had gone before them. The religious poetry of the Christian Saxons abounds in passages taken from Beowulf; and probably a large part of what is not imitated from that poem is taken from others of the early Saxon cycles.

Of the first of these periods we have remaining but one complete monument—the poem to which we have already alluded of the adventures of Beowulf the Geat. There can be no doubt that this poem belongs to what was once an extensive cycle. The hero Beowulf was one of our own forefathers, a Geat, or Angle, who, according to the mythic genealogies of the Northerns, ruled over the Angle tribes in Sleswick and Jutland before the Saxon settlement in England. Mr. Kemble had shown in his preface that, from these genealogies, the period of his reign must have been the middle of the fifth century; but he is now inclined to give him a much more mythic character. There are many reasons for believing that the poem itself was composed at a remote period,—that it was brought here by the first Anglo-Saxon settlers; but that, in passing through different hands, down to the time when the transcript now preserved was made, it has been in some parts modernised, and that Christian ideas have been introduced in place of the older heathen ones. Still there are many traces of its older form, and the Christianity which is introduced sits awkwardly on the Paganism which constantly peeps from under it.

The poem of Beowulf is a magnificent and accurate picture of life in the heroic ages. Its plot is simple; a few striking incidents, grandly traced, and casting strong and broad shadows, form the picture. It is a story of open, single-handed warfare, where love is never introduced as a motive of action, or stratagem as an instrument. Beowulf, like Hercules, seeks glory only by clearing the world of monsters and oppressors. A report had reached him that the court of Hrothgar, a Danish king, was infested by an unearthly monster, the grendel, who nightly entered Her-

rot, the royal hall, and slew the warriors in their sleep. The emulation of the Geatish prince was raised,—he felt himself equal to the task of combating the depredator; for, as the story tells, he possessed the strength of thirty men, and, with a chosen band of his followers, he embarked for the Danish coast. The reception of the warriors in Denmark is peculiarly characteristic.

"Guman út-scufon,	"The men pushed out
wéras on wil-síð,	(the heroes on their voyage)
wudu bundenne.	the bound wood (the ship).
Ge-wát þá ofer wæg-holm	Went then over the deep waves,
winde ge-fysed	driven forwards by the wind,
flóta fámi-heals,	the foamy-necked ship,
fugle ge-lícost,	likest unto a bird;
oð þæt, ymb án-tíd	till, about the hour of one
óþres dogores,	on the second day,
wunden stefna	the twisted vessel
ge-waden hæfde	had so far proceeded
þæt ða líðende	that the voyagers
land ge-sawon,	saw land,
brim-clifu blican,	the sea-cliffs glittering,
beorgas steápe,	the steep hills,
síde sæ-næssas."—(*l.* 429.)	the broad promontories."

Their landing did not escape the vigilant eyes of the Danish watchman, who was placed in his little fort to overlook the coast:

"[Ðá] of wealle ge-seah	"Then from his wall beheld them
weard Scildinga,	the watch of the Scyldings,
se þe [holm]-clifu	he whose duty it was
healdan scolde,	to keep the sea-cliffs,
beran ofer bolcan	as they were bearing over the balks
beorhte randas,	their bright shields,
fyrd-searu fús-lícu."—(*l.* 456.)	their war-apparatus ready for service."

He immediately arrests the progress of Beowulf and his followers,—demands who they are, whence they come, and what is their errand, without attempting to conceal his suspicions that, as they were ignorant of the watchword, that errand could not be friendly,—pays a compliment to the gallant appearance of their leader,—and concludes his speech with the concise observation—

"Ofost is sélest	"Best is quickest
tó ge-cyðanne	to make known
hwanan eówre cyme syndon."	whence is your coming."

(*l.* 510.)

The guard was satisfied with the answer of Beowulf; and, after having taken the customary precautions of unlading their vessel, and drawing it up on the beach, he permitted the strangers to pursue their way to the royal court, where they were again received with suspicion and distrust, until, on his name being announced to king Hrothgar, who was well acquainted with his family and his renown, the hero was ushered into the royal presence, to give an account of his mission. Beowulf then related to the king, in a set speech, how the report of the grendel's depredations had reached his country,—how his companions in arms, who had often witnessed his valour and the success of his exploits, had counselled him to go to the assistance of the unhappy Danes,—and how he was now come to offer his aid against the monster who persecuted them,—and ended by expressing his resignation to the fate which Heaven might send him in the encounter. "If I fall," says he, "it will be in the performance of my duty,"—

"Ná [þú] mínne þearft	"Thou needest not
hafalan hydan;	to hide my hafela,

ac he me habban wile	but he [the Grendel] will have me
deóre fáhne.	stained with gore.
Gif mec deáð nimeð	If death shall take me,
byreð blódig wæl,	bear forth my bloody corpse;
byrgean þenceð:	remember to bury me:
eteð án-genga	let the solitary passenger eat
un-murn-líce;	un-mournfully:
mearcað mór-hó[f]u;	mark my fen-dwelling;
nó ðú ymb mínes ne þearft	thou needest not
líces feorme	about my corpse-feast
leng sorgian.	to care longer.
On-send Hige-láce,	Should the war take me,
gif mec hild nime,	send to Higelac
beadu-scrúda betst	the best of war-coverings,
þæt míne breóst wereð,	the most precious of clothing—
hrægla sélest,	that which guardeth my breast:
þæt is Hrædlan láf,	it is the legacy of Hrædla,
Welandes ge-weorc.	the work of Weland.
Gæð á wyrd swá hió scel."	Fate will always go as it must."

(*l.* 835.)

In another speech, Hrothgar accepts, with many declarations of gratitude, the offered aid of Beowulf,—recounts to him the depredations of the fiend who haunted his court, and the unsuccessful attempts which had been made to destroy it,—and finally invites the strangers to join in the festivities of his hall.

Our Saxon forefathers seem to have been as much addicted to the making of lengthy speeches as some of their descendants at the present day; and we have several very fair specimens in the course of the present poem. We are tempted to give an example, though by no means a long one. In the hall of Hrothgar sat a person named Hunferth, the son of Ecglaf, envious and jealous, who delighted

in cavilling at the deeds of others, like the Sir Kay of the romances of the court of king Arthur; though Hunferth is not, like Sir Kay, a coward,—because it is a character which would not be suffered in a poem of the age of that of Beowulf. Hunferth was envious of Beowulf's fame, and indulges his spleen by rallying him on some of his former deeds, which he represents in a disadvantageous light. We are the more inclined to give the speech of Hunferth, as it has been entirely misunderstood by Mr. Conybeare, who, in his *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, says that Hunferth rails at Beowulf's "piratical exploits."

"Hunferð maþelode
Ecg-láfes bearn,
þe æt fótum sæt
freán Scyldinga;
on-band beado-rúne;
wæs him Beó-wulfes síð,
módges mere-faran,
micel æf-þunca:
for þon þe he ne úþe
þæt ænig óðer man
æfre mærðe þon má
middan-geardes
ge-hedde under heofenum
þonne hé sylfa,
'Eart þú se Beó-wulf
se þe wið Brecan wunne
on sídne sæ,
ymb sund-flíte,
ðær git for wlence
wadá cunnedon,
and for dol-gilpe
on deóp wæter
aldrum néþdon?

"Hunferth spoke,
the son of Ecglaf,
who sat at the feet
of the lord of the Scyldings:
he made a quarrelsome speech.
To him was the journey
of the bold sea-farer, Beówulf,
a matter of much annoyance;
because he was unwilling to grant
that any other man
should possess more reputation
of the world,
under the heavens,
than himself.
'Art thou that Beowulf
who strove against Breca
on the wide sea,
in a swimming-match;
where ye two for pride
tried the fords,
and for vain boasting
ventured with your lives
on the deep water?

Ne inc ænig mon,
ne leóf ne láð,
be-leán mihte
sore-fullne síð.
þá git on sund reón,
þær git eagor-streám
earmum þéhton,
mæton mere-stræta,
mundum brugdon,
glidon ofer gàr-secg;
geofon-yþum
weól wintrys wylm:
git on wæteres æht
seofon-niht swuncon.
He þe æt sunde ofer-flát,
hæfde máre mægen:
þá hine on morgen-tíd
on Heaþo-ræmes
holm up-æt-bær;
ðonon he ge-sóhte
swæsne éðel,
leóf his leódum,
land Brondinga,
freóðo-burh fægere,
þær he folc áhte
burh and beágas.
Beót eal wið þe
sunu Bean-stánes
só[ðe] ge-læste.
Ðonne wéne ic tó þe
wyrsan þingea,
ðeáh þú heaðo-ræsa
ge-hwær dóhte,
grimre gúðe,
gif þú Grendl[es] dearst
niht-longne fyrst
neán hí[dan].'

You two might no man,
neither friend nor enemy,
hinder by his reproaches
from your sorrowful journey.
Then ye two rowed on the deep
where ye the ocean-stream
covered with your arms;
ye measured the lake-paths,
with your arms ye whirled them
ye glided over the ocean;
with the waves of the sea
the tide of winter boiled.
Ye two on the domain of the water
laboured seven days.
He beat thee on the waves—
he had more strength:
then, at the morning tide,
the deep sea bore him up
on Heathoræme;
thence he sought,
dear to his people,
his own peculiar inheritance,
the land of the Brondings,—
a fair metropolis,
where he possessed a people,
a town, and rings [treasures].
All his promise
the son of Beanstan
truly performed to thee.
Yet I expect for thee
a worse affair,
though thou in hostile onsets,
in grim war,
hast been everywhere successful,
if thou darest,
for the space of a whole night,
to abide near Grendel.'

Beó-wulf maþelode,
bearn Ecg-þeówes:
'Hwæt! þú worn fela
wine mín Hunfer[ð],
beóre druncen,
ymb Brecan spræce,
sægdest from his siðe;
sóð ic talige
þæt ic mere-strengo
máran áhte,
earfeþo on yþum,
ðonne ænig óþer man.
Wit þæt ge-cwædon
cniht-wesende
and ge-beótedon
(wæron begen þá git
on geógoð-feore),
þæt wit on gár-secg út
aldrum néðdon,
and þæt ge-æfndon swá.
Hæfdon swurd nacod,
þá wit on sund reón,
heard on handa;
wit unc wið hron-fixas
wérian þóhton.
Ne he wiht fram me
flód-yþum feor
fleótan meahte,
hraþor on holme,
no ic fram him wolde:,
ðá wit æt-[s]omne
on sæ wæron
fíf nihta fyrst,
oþ þæt unc flód tó-dráf,
wado weallende,
wedera cealdost,
nipende niht,

Beowulf spoke,
the son of Ecgtheow:
'Lo! thou for a long time,
my friend Hunferth,
drunken with beer,
hast discoursed concerning Breca,
has spoken respecting his journey;
I tell thee the truth,
that I possess
more of strength on the sea,
of laboriousness on the waters,
than any other man.
We two had said that,
when we were boys,
and had promised
(we were still both
in the prime of youth)
that we out on the ocean
would venture our lives,
and that we accomplished thus.
We had our naked swords
hard in our hands
when we rowed upon the deep
we thought to defend ourselves
against the walruses.
He could not, in any degree,
more swift on the deep,
swim far from me,
over the waves of the sea:
I would not from him.
There we two together
were on the sea
the space of five nights,
until the flood drove us asunder;
the boiling fords,
the coldest of storms,
the darkening night,

and norþan [w]ind,
heaþo-grim and-hwearf:
hreo wæron [y]þa.
Wæs mere-fixa
mód on-hréred:
þær me wiþ láðum
líc-syrce mín,
heard hond-locen,
helpe ge-fremede;
beado-hrægl broden
on breóstum læg,
golde ge-gyrwed.
Me tó grunde teáh
fáh feónd-scaða;
fæste hæfde
grim on grápe:
hwæþre me gyfeþe wearð,
þæt ic ag-læcan
orde ge-ræhte,
hilde-bille;
heaþo-ræs for-nam
mihtig mere-deór
þurh míne hand.
Swá mec ge-lóme
láð-ge-teónan
þreatedon þearle;
ic him þénode
deóran sweorde,
swá hit ge-défe was.
Næs híe ðære fylle
ge feán hæfdon,
mán-for-dædlan,
þæt híe me þegon,
symbel ymb-sæton
sæ-grunde neáh.
Ac on mergenne
mecum wunde,

and a wind from the north,
fiercely turned us away;
rough were the waves.
The courage of the sea-fishes
was excited:
there my body garment,
hard-locked by the hand,
gave me aid
against foes;
my twisted war-dress
lay upon my breast,
furnished with gold.
The variegated enemy
dragged me to the bottom;
he had me fast
grim in his gripe:
nevertheless it was granted me,
that I the villain
reached with my weapon.
with my war-bill;
the mighty sea-beast
received the war-rush
through my hand.
Thus me frequently
my hateful foes
threatened vehemently;
I served them out
with my dear sword,
as it was right I should.
By no means they of the slaughter
had any joy—
the wicked villains,
that they meddled with me,
that they set upon me all at once,
near the bottom of the sea.
But on the morning,
wounded with swords,

be yð-láfe	they lay aloft
uppe lægon,	on the beach,
swe[ordum] á-swefede;	put to sleep by the sword,
þæt syðþan ná	that they have never since
ymb bront[ne] ford,	hindered from their way
brim-líðende	the sea-sailors
láde ne letton,"—(*l.* 992.)	about the bubbling fords."

In this manner Beowulf continues to expatiate on his valour against the nickers, and other sea-monsters, of whom he boasts of having killed nine; and he concludes by insinuating, that had Hunferth himself been as valiant as he would have people believe him, the grendel would not have infested so long the court of Hrothgar. After having spent the day in festivities, Beowulf and his companions are left to guard the hall during the night, where they are visited by the grendel, who attacks Beowulf, supposing him to be asleep: after a terrible struggle he receives a mortal wound, and flies precipitately to his retreat. Amid their rejoicings upon the destruction of their persecutor, the followers of Hrothgar are visited during the following night by another monster, the grendel's mother; who revenges the grendel by the death of Æschere, the monarch's favorite counsellor, and retires to her den. The terms in which the monarch expressed his grief for the loss of his bosom friend are simple and pathetic:

"Hróðgar maþelode,	"Hrothgar spoke,
helm Scyldinga:	the helm of the Scyldings:—
'Ne frón þú æfter sælum;	'Ask not after happiness;
sorh is ge-niwod	sorrow is renewed
Denigea leódum;	to the people of the Danes;
deád is Æschere,	dead is Æschere,

Yrmenláfes	Yrmenlafe's
yldra broþor,	elder brother;
mín runwita,	the partner of my secrets,
and mín ræd-bora,	and my counsellor,
seaxl-ge-tealla	who stood at my shoulder
ðonne we on or-lege	when we in battle
hafelan wéredon,	guarded our helmets,
þonne hniton feþan,	when troops clashed,
eoferas cnysedon.	dashed together their helms.
[A] scolde eorl	Ever should an earl
wesan ær-gód	be noble
swylc Æschere [wæs],"	as Æschere was.

(*l.* 2642.)

Beowulf consoles the Danish king, by offering to pursue the new intruder to her home; he finds her abode is under the water, whither he descends, and finally returns victorious. The king loads him with gifts, and he returns to his own country. This completes the first part of the poem, which reaches to the twenty-eighth canto; the latter part of which, with the whole of the twenty-ninth, and the beginning of the thirtieth, appear to have perished by mutilation of the manuscript. Afterwards we have a new story; that of the last expedition of Beowulf, now old and monarch over his people, against a fire-drake which molested them, and of his death in the encounter.

We will not dwell further on the story of Beowulf, for the beauty and interest of the poem are not in the plot, but in the accessories—in the descriptions of the festivities of the royal hall, where the queen of Hrothgar served round the ale to the heroes; of the abodes of the grendels and of the fire-drake; of the combats in which Beowulf is engaged; and in the strong and natural pictures of the manners and feelings of the persons who are introduced—

pictures which sufficiently prove that the bard who composed them was well acquainted with the state of society he describes. In its present condition, this poem consists of 6359 lines. The manuscript is of the tenth century.

That the poems of their old mythic cycles continued long to be popular among the Anglo-Saxons, we have the strongest evidence in the comparative modernness of the manuscript of Beowulf, and in the frequent use of expressions taken from it in the later Christian poems. We have, also, a curious proof of the popularity of the older Saxon and northern stories among our forefathers, even as late as the end of the eleventh century, in the preface to the interesting and nearly contemporary life of the Saxon Hereward, who so long held out in the marshes of Ely against the Norman conqueror. The writer of this life says, that among other sources of information concerning his hero, he had used a work of the presbyter Leofric, Hereward's own deacon, who resided at Brun, the place where lay Hereward's patrimony. This Leofric, he tells us, occupied himself in collecting for the edification of his hearers, all the acts of the giants and the warriors from the fables of the ancients, or, in the instance of more modern heroes, from the trust-worthy relations of those who had known them, and in writing them in English that they might be preserved in people's memories.*

In the course of Hereward's history allusion is made to the strength of one of these old warriors, Godwine; a name which occurs in the Saxon mythic genealogy, and on whose

* Hujus enim memorati presbyteri erat studium omnes actus gigantum et bellatorum, ex fabulis antiquorum et ex fideli relatione ad ædificationem audientium congregare, et ob memoriam Angliæ literis commendare.

exploits there perhaps existed a poem similar to that of Beowulf. Of the latter class of histories, or, perhaps poems, which Leofric wrote, whose subject was the heroic deeds of the Anglo-Saxon heroes, we have a specimen in the noble fragment on the battle of Maldon and the death of Byrhtnoth, printed in the *Analecta* of Mr. Thorpe. Many of these early histories were preserved through the change of the language into what we term Middle-English: there we had once the romance of Wade, and we have still several manuscripts of that of Horn, which was so popular as to be transferred into Norman; and three manuscripts of the Norman poem, all incomplete, are still preserved.

As Christianity, however, established itself in the hearts and minds of our Saxon forefathers, their poets not only introduced occasionally somewhat of the new religion into the old heroic poems as they passed through their hands, as we have seen to have been done in Beowulf, but they took up also Christian subjects, and clothed them in all the metaphor and all the loftiness and grandeur of the national verse. Thus we have poems on scriptural subjects, such as Judith, printed in the *Analecta*—a fragment, but one of the best specimens of Anglo-Saxon verse that we possess, and the Maccabees, as yet unpublished; and Lives of the Saints, such as the fine poem on the life of St. Andrew, in the Vercelli MS., the life of St. Juliana, in the Exeter MS., and several others of less poetical value. The Old Testament was fertile in subjects which were agreeable to the feelings of Saxons—wars and heroic deeds; and some poet, stringing together a few of the better poems on Scripture subjects, by very unequal verses of his own, has formed a kind of poetical version of the earlier parts of the Bible, which is preserved in a very

mutilated state in a manuscript at Oxford, and which has been twice printed under the name of Cædmon.

The inequality of the different parts of the poem attributed to Cædmon, was first noticed by Conybeare. A fine poem on the fall of the angels, the creation, and the fall of man, is awkwardly prefaced by a repetition of the same story, much more briefly told. Then we have a barren version of the chapters of Genesis to the close of the life of Abraham, except the accounts of the flood, and of the war of the kings against Sodom, which are told in a superior style. Suddenly, without any connexion with that of Abraham, we are introduced to the history of Moses; which, again, is told in a very different manner, and has all the marks of being a separate poem. The exordium, indeed, may be compared with that of Beowulf:

"Hwæt! we feor and neáh
ge-frigen habaþ
ofer middan-geard
Moyses dómas,
wræclico wórd-riht
wera cneorissum;
* * * *
langsumme ræd
hælcþum secgan:
ge-hyre se þe wille," &c.

"Lo! we far and near
have learnt by inquiry
through middle earth,
the decrees of Moses—
a wondrous oral law
to the tribes of men;
* * * * *
a long narration
for men to tell;
let him hear who will."

The exordium of Beowulf commences thus:

"Hwæt! we Gár-Dena,
in gear-dagum.
þeód cyninga,
þrym ge-frunon,
hú þa æþelingas
ellen fremedon," &c.

"Lo! we have learnt by inquiry
the glory of the Gar-Danes,
the mighty kings,
in days of yore,
how the nobles
achieved valour," &c.

After the history of Moses follows that of Nebuchadnezzar, equally distinct and complete in itself, which occupies all the remainder of the first part. The second part comprises chiefly a poem on the descent of Christ into Hades; a favorite story, known, in somewhat later times, as the Harrowing of Hell..

If any of the scriptural poems which are thus collected belong to that Cædmon whose legion is told by Bede, we should conceive one to be the story of the Creation, which deserves attention even for its own great beauty, and is still more interesting from its singular correspondence, sometimes even in expression, with the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. This story is very old among our forefathers, and probably owes much to northern fable. In the account of the creation, as given in the *Völu-spá*, there are whole phrases which occur in the poem of Cædmon; for instance, we read in the latter how, at first, there was nothing but cavern-shade (heolster-sceado) in the broad gulf (sída grund), which stood deep and dim, (deóp and dim), and the earth was not yet green with grass (græs ún-gréne). In the former,

"Ar war allda	"It was the beginning of ages
þar er Ymir lygdi;	when Ymir lived;
wara sandr né sær,	there was neither sand nor sea,
né swalar unnir.	nor cold waves.
Jörd fannz æwa,	Earth was found nowhere,
né upp himin,	nor heaven aloft;
gap war ginnunga,	there was a gaping hollow,
enn gras hwergi."	but grass nowhere."

The Lucifer of Cædmon is, at first, one of the most beautiful and most favoured angels of heaven: he enjoys there the highest rank under God himself, but his pride

leads him to become envious of his superior, against whom he presumptuously makes war, is driven from heaven, and confined in hell—a place which God had made for him and for his accomplices. He is introduced there lamenting his fallen condition, and mortified by the thought that God had created a new world, in which he had placed Adam, to enjoy that happiness which he had himself lost. He demands the counsels of his companions, that they might contrive some plan by which to alleviate their own pains by drawing Adam and his descendants into the same misfortunes; and as Lucifer himself is firmly fettered down, one of his attendants offers to undertake the task of seduction, and departs to explore the newly-made earth. He there represents himself to Adam and his consort as a messenger from God, bringing them God's orders to eat of the forbidden fruit. Adam distrusts the word of the tempter, but Eve, weaker than her husband, and fearing God's displeasure for his refusal, eats, and persuades Adam at last to do the same; and the fiend returns exulting to his master.

It is unnecessary to give a longer extract of Cædmon's story, because Mr. Thorpe's edition is accompanied with a good English translation, and because that book is, or may be, in the hands of every one; and we may add, that it *ought to be* in the hands of every one interested in Saxon literature. His equally useful edition of the Exeter MS. completes the publication of nearly all that is really valuable in Anglo-Saxon verse. In that precious volume, which comprises a large and most curious collection of the poetry of this early period, given to the cathedral of Exeter in the eleventh century by bishop Leofric, among abundance of pieces on religious and moral subjects, and

riddles, we find some fragments of the early romantic cycles of our forefathers. Some of these, particularly one in which mention is made of Weland the Smith, Dietrich of Berne, &c., connect those cycles with that of the Niebelungen Lied, and with the whole circle of northern mythology and romance.

ESSAY II.

ANGLO-NORMAN POETRY.

THE Normans were a northern tribe, and originally spoke a northern tongue; but at an early period after their settlement in France, they adopted that corrupt form of the Latin language which was, from its origin, called *Romane*, and which has, in the course of time, been changed into modern French. From the language which they spoke, and the country which they inhabited, by the Saxons they were themselves generally designated as *Frenchmen*.

Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers appear to have been a people extremely jealous of all foreign influence or interference. A weak prince, Edward the Confessor, first introduced into England Norman manners and the Norman (French) language. The national jealousy of his subjects was soon roused; the nobles, who were disinherited to make way for foreigners, took up arms; and the Saxon parliament passed a decree, which banished from the kingdom the numerous Normans whom the king had introduced into the offices of church and state. But the bad policy of one king, though not exercised long, worked great and lasting evils. The partiality which Edward had

shown towards foreigners led eventually, after a very brief period, to the conquest of his kingdom.

At the time of William's entrance, it is more than probable that the *Romane* tongue was commonly understood by the higher ranks in England: from an incident in his life, it appears that Hereward, so long the opposer of Norman influence after it had become supreme, was well acquainted with it. From that period the Saxon language began to be broken up; and even the form in which the Saxons had been accustomed to write the Roman letters was exchanged for another, introduced, with their language and literature, by the intruders.

Early in the fourteenth century the influence of the Norman tongue in England began to lose ground fast; its best, or, at least, its most popular literary productions were translated into English; the use of the language itself was by degrees restricted to the courts of law, and at last rejected even from them; and the English language threw away more and more its adventitious words, and became more native in its character, till that character was fixed by the host of luminaries who gave to the seventeenth century so brilliant a place in our literary annals. The Norman literature shared the fate of the language, and, after going through many transformations, the romances and fabliaux which had amused and delighted the nobles of the thirteenth century, became the ballads and chapbooks which were hawked about the streets, for the entertainment of the labourer and the peasant, in the seventeenth. In France, also, as the Romane tongue was gradually moulded down to its present form, the literature which it contained passed through somewhat similar transformations. One of these transformations, the translating of

the older metrical romances into more modern prose, and the consequent neglect of the originals, was the cause of the loss of much of the earlier French poetry.

After the Romane language and literature were no longer popular, they were long neglected both in England and in France. In the latter country the revival of a taste for their early poetry began at a comparatively modern date. Some of the older poems had, indeed, long retained a share of reputation—like those of Chaucer in England; and we have editions of the *Roman de la Rose* of Jehan de Meun before and in 1529, and again in 1735, 1737, and 1799. In 1756, Barbazan first published his selection of early metrical tales and fabliaux; and in 1799, Le Grand d'Aussy published his work on the same subject. The latter writer furnished several papers on the early Norman and French poetry to the volumes of the *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits.* Among those who first made this subject their study, was the Abbé de la Rue, who visited England during the latter part of the last century, and who communicated several papers to the *Transactions* of our Society of Antiquaries. In his old age he published the result of the labours of his life, in three volumes, entitled *Essais Historiques sur les Bardes, les Jongleurs, et les Trouvères, Normands et Anglo-Normands.* The abbé gathered his knowledge in the infancy of the study; his mind, like that of many of his countrymen, was not very philological; and his book is filled with inaccuracies and ungrounded hypotheses. Early in the present century, a more decided taste for their older literature began to appear in France; and from that time to the present a number of persons have come forward as editors of the romances and fabliaux of their forefathers. Roquefort

made a glossary of the language, and edited the works of Marie; Pluquet edited the *Roman de Rou;* Méon gave the public a new edition of the older publication of Barbazan—two additional volumes of early metrical tales, of which one is restricted to religious stories—a new edition of the *Roman de la Rose*—and one of the lengthy romance of Renard. They all committed errors without number, because they were deficient in an accurate philological knowledge of the language which they published. In this respect, however, the school which has followed them, is much superior, and many texts have now been printed with sufficient correctness to enable us to investigate with safety the grammar of the language. Among the numerous distinguished labourers in this field at the present day in France, it is enough to mention the names of Paulin Paris, Jubinal, Michel, Le Roux de Lincy, &c.

If the Normans ever had a literature of northern origin peculiar to themselves, it seems to have been nearly forgotten before their entrance into England, where their literary productions were formed upon the models presented to them by the language which they had then adopted in place of their own. Their first romances were those of Charlemagne and Arthur. The class of poetry, however, which was first popular among the Normans in England consisted chiefly of chronicles and saints' legends. Our libraries contain many early Anglo-Norman metrical lives of the saints, which, though the subject is not very inviting, are often valuable to the philologist for their language; and are sometimes extremely curious in affording us not only incidents which illustrate the manners and modes of thinking of our forefathers of the twelfth century, but also historical information. Few of them have

been printed, and it is neither probable nor desirable that many of them ever should be printed. M. Monmerqué, however, a distinguished patron of these studies in France, edited for the Société des Bibliophiles, or French Roxburgh Club, the life of St. Nicholas, by the celebrated chronicler Wace, the author of the *Roman de Rou*, an interesting metrical history of the dukes of Normandy, from the first expedition of the Normans, and their settlement in Neustria, to the reign of Henry I. of England. Another chronicle of the dukes of Normandy, in the same language, and equally in metre, but long and tedious, was written by Wace's contemporary and rival, Benoît de Sainte-More, and extends to nearly forty-six thousand verses. Wace also composed, under the title of *Le Brut d'Angleterre*, an enlarged metrical version of the celebrated history (or romance) of the British kings, which had been composed in Latin, in the same century, by Geoffrey of Monmouth. One of the manuscripts of Wace's *Brut*, which is preserved in the British Museum, contains a metrical Norman history of the Anglo-Saxon kings, by Geoffrey Gaimar, a chronicler, also, of the twelfth century, which fills up the period of English history from the fall of the British dynasty to the beginning of the twelfth century. It has been supposed that Gaimar's poem, in its original state, contained the whole of the history which had been written by Geoffrey of Monmouth; of whose book there is another metrical version, by an unknown Norman poet, preserved among the manuscripts of the British Museum.

A metrical chronicle does not seem to promise much occasion for the exercise of poetic skill. Yet the poets who composed them were generally such as, from the fame

which they had gained by other works, had been selected by kings or nobles to perform the task; and they took every opportunity of introducing the same descriptions and the same embellishments with which they habitually adorned their romances, and which, it must be confessed, are sometimes not unpleasing. Thus, when the Latin chronicle informed him that an event occurred in the spring, Benoît will tell us that it was

"Quant vint el tens qu'ivers derive,
Que l'erbe vers point en la rive,
Lors que florissent li ramel,
E dulcement chantent oisel,
Merle, mauvis, e loriol,
E estornel, e rossignol,
La blanche flor pent en l'espine,
E reverdoie la gaudine,
Quant li tens est dulz et souez."

"What time chill winter hides his head,
And verdant herbage clothes the mead,
When every tree puts forth its bud,
And gaily chants the feather'd brood
Of thrush, and lark, and nightingale,
In varied note, through wood and dale,
And white-thorn shows its bloom between
The copse's robe of new-born green,
And sweet and softly breathes the air."

It is not, however, by the introduction of such descriptions that a chronicle could be transformed into a poem; and, if they were frequently used, they would only appear as interruptions in the dull slow stream of the narrative of events. But it happened, fortunately for the writers of the twelfth century, that the chronicles on which they had to work partook much more of the poetic than of the his-

torical; that the materials on which they were founded were generally fable—often poetry, but of a much older formation. There was, moreover, one class of romances, which was never looked upon as fabulous; and as the monks embellished their prose Latin chronicles with saints' legends and miracles, so the poets in their rhymes made no scruple of inserting the romances of Havelok, of Guy of Warwick, of Bevis, and of the whole cycle of the Round Table. The result was natural—the character of the poetry was extremely unequal, sometimes breathing the light style of the romances themselves—at others, labouring under all the heaviness of prose.

Wace possessed, indeed, not much of that scepticism which now seems to be the necessary characteristic of a historian. He had heard much of the legends connected with the forest of Brecheliant, in Bretagne, and of the enchanted fountain of Berenton within its confines, where, by a certain process, the inhabitants were accustomed to procure rain whenever they wanted it. Moreover, he had been assured that one might see *fairies* there:

> "There they see the fairies play,
> If we trust what Bretons say."
>
> "Là solt l'en li fées veir,
> Se li Bretunz dïsent veir."
>
> (*Le Roman de Rou*, v. 11,528.)

Wace's curiosity was exceedingly moved: he travelled to Brecheliant to seek the fairies; there he found the forest, and hunted well every corner and every bush, but not a single fairy could he discover, and nothing even deserving the name of a "marvel." The poet returned, mortified at his own credulity: and in his account of the

gathering of the Norman troops before the invasion of England and the battle of Hastings, he has taken the occasion of telling his story, and has made a candid confession of his own folly. "I went there," says he, "to seek marvels; I saw the forest, and I saw the country; I sought marvels, but, alas I found none; I was a fool when I went, and a fool when I returned: I sought folly, and I confess my fault."

"Là alai jo merveilles querre,
Vis la forest e vis la terre;
Merveilles quis, maiz ne 's trovai;
Fol m'en revins, fol i alai,
Fol i alai, fol m'en revins,
Folie quis, por fol me tins." (*Ib. l.* 11,534.)

It is not improbable that the groundwork of the cycles of Charlemagne and of Arthur were prose Latin histories, such as those of Turpin and Geoffrey, whose foundations had been traditions of a still older date. The fabulous story attributed to the former was, perhaps, the groundwork of the romances of the "douze pairs," in giving the subject of that of Roncevaux; and, when once the emperor became a hero of romance, it was natural enough to give his name to the tales and stories which were at that time floating about: such as that of the "gabs" of the twelve peers at the court of King Hugo, published under the title of the *Voyage of Charlemagne to Constantinople*. It is probable that the noble romance of Roncevaux, printed from a manuscript at Oxford, is a work of the middle or latter part of the twelfth century. The *Voyage of Charlemagne* was evidently written a little later. The former is attributed to a *trouvère* named Turold; its subject is

alluded to in the latter, and they are both written in the same style of verse.

The subject of the *Voyage* is one of those jests which seem to have amused the Norman nobles at their cups. Irritated by an imprudent observation of the empress, Charles goes to see king Hugo at Constantinople, and, in his way, passes by Jerusalem and Jericho. He found Hugo, with his court, amusing themselves in the green fields near his capital; was hospitably received; and, at the supper, Oliver became enamoured of the beautiful daughter of the king of Constantinople, who is afterwards the subject of his "gab." It seems to have been the custom of the barons in the middle ages to make jokes while at their wine. Charlemagne and his twelve peers retired to their chamber, to drink their wine together; and there, without any feeling of restraint, they began each to make his "gab," or joke, which consisted in an extravagant gasconade. Charlemagne himself began. He said, that if Hugo placed one of his "bachelors," armed with helm and hauberk, on his steed, with his sword he would strike him on the head—would, at one blow, cut through his body, and through the saddle and horse; and, if he let the sword enter the ground—

> "Jà n'en ert mès receuz par nul hume charnel,
> Tresque il seit pleiné haunste de terre desteret." (*l.* 463.)

Roland declared that he could blow down the city by a puff of his breath; and Oliver boasted of his great powers which he could exercise upon the king's daughter. Even Turpin, the archbishop, gabbed; and his boast was of his surpassing skill in performing mountebank tricks upon horses. After they had all gabbed, a spy, who had con-

cealed himself in the room, hastened to king Hugo, and told him all that they had said. Many of the gabs seemed derogatory to the dignity of the king; he was enraged beyond measure, and he swore that he would behead them all if they did not accomplish their boasts. The Franks were terrified at the consequence which seemed likely to result from their imprudence, and their emperor, reproaching Hugo for his treachery in placing a spy in their private chamber, where they talked over their wine, brought forth, as his last resource, the relics which had been given him at Jerusalem. It so happened, that Oliver was first called upon. He was shut up all night in a chamber with the princess: she was kind; and, though he fell far short of his boast, she gave her testimony in his favour. The king was astounded, declared he must be an enchanter, and proceeded to prove the others. Charlemagne had, however, prayed hard upon his relics; and, by their miraculous interference, the king was so astonished at the feats of some of the peers, that he sought no further trial, but became reconciled to the emperor, agreed to receive him as his liege-lord, and the latter returned joyful to his own country.

In the latter part of the 12th century, another class of historical poems became popular, its subjects being detached portions of contemporary history. Of the reign of Henry II are preserved two of these poems; a poem of that monarch's wars with his sons, written by one Jordan Fantosme, in manuscript at Durham and Lincoln; and one at Lambeth, relating to his conquest of Ireland. Both have been printed. Of the reign of Henry's son, John, we have also two: the story of the adventures of Eustace the monk, preserved in a manuscript of the Royal Library at Paris, and the history

of the adventures of Fulke Fitz-Warine, which is preserved in a prose version. These two differ from the poems of the preceding reign in being more personal, and in containing more of romance. The latter are as purely historical as the chronicles; the former relate the personal adventures of outlaws celebrated for their wild and romantic lives; and, as many of those adventures could only be known by hearsay—often but by conjecture—the history had become interwoven with fiction before it fell into the hands of the poet. The writer of the adventures of Fulke was evidently a bard who belonged to the family; he was well acquainted with every corner of Fulke's castle of Ludlow, and with the surrounding country, and even with their traditions: and though the prose version is so literal that we can sometimes trace in it the verses of the original, it is much to be lamented that the poem itself is lost.

The romances of the Round Table became more popular in England than those of Charlemagne, and were repeated and diversified in a thousand different shapes. The nucleus on which the cycle, in either case, was formed, was probably at first small; but it was not the plot but the details which, after a while, constituted the essential part of a Norman and of a French romance. So that the writer strung together a goodly list of chivalrous engagements and cunning stratagems, it was of little consequence what might be their object, or what might be their result. The heroes whose names had become popular were naturally those which the general taste preferred; and, for a time, every knight who slew a monster, or who rescued a lady, must necessarily be one of Arthur's court. In one instance we have seen that the name of Charlemagne had been adopted, and a passing tradition of a voyage which he was

supposed to have made to the East, eagerly seized upon, as the most convenient medium for telling a pleasant joke—a joke which, a little later, might have been more appropriately formed into a fabliau. In like manner, at an early period, the name of Tristram was adopted, and the story of his amour with the fair Isoude, perhaps, invented, to give occasion for telling the stratagems of a venturous and love-sick knight to possess the person of his mistress.

The worthy "laureate" and satirist of the sixteenth century, John Skelton, of whose collected works an edition has been given by Mr. Dyce, reduces the tale of Tristram's love for Isoude to its true dignity, if robbed of its details, when he talks of having read

> "Of Tristram and kyng Marke,
> And al the whole warke [*work*]
> Of bele Isold his wife,
> For whom was much strife:
> Some say she was lyght,
> And made her husband knyghte
> Of the common hal
> That cuckoldes men cal."

There is, indeed, something rather disgusting than pleasing in the story of a man who lived in a constant and adulterous intercourse, and that not over-secretly, with the wife of his own uncle. But the age which witnessed the formation of such a story was one in which the moral rights of property were not much considered—in which the abstract criminality of such an intercourse was not looked upon as greatly deepened because it came under the title of adultery, so long as the perpetrator could either brave the power or escape the eye of the party who was injured. At the same time, the incident of the love-potion which rendered

that intercourse unavoidable, while it threw a magical air over the story, flattered the selfish feelings of the men of those days, in covering their excesses, and their violence, and their recklessness, with the plea of fatality—a plea in which the oppressed and the oppressor alike seek consolation or excuse where immorality and violence are predominant.

Still the romantic adventures of the two lovers, and the melancholy conclusion of their history, are not without interest; and the poem, in its different forms, is an important monument of the taste of an early period.

In the thirteenth century, it is probable that the practice of reciting the long romances began to decline, and the minstrels supplied their place with brief and more amusing pieces; the object at which they now aimed being to make "beards wag merry in hall." A large and, certainly, an interesting portion of the French and Norman poetry of this period consisted of short metrical tales, published under the titles of fabliaux, lays, dits, &c. There can be little doubt that a very large number of the fabliaux of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, productions so congenial to the light character of our continental neighbours, were written in France; but their minstrels were a vagabond race: from their own land they wandered over to England and to Ireland, which was then looked upon as the extremity of the world, and the French fabliaux were as popular at the courts of the nobles of our own islands as were the works of native writers. Many of them bear internal evidence of having been written in this island. The object of a fabliau is generally to provoke laughter and mirth—some pleasant joke, some crafty stratagem of knight or clerk to cheat a villan, to seduce a maiden, or to debauch

a wife; or some ludicrous scrape into which those persons had fallen in the attempt, is their most common subject. Sometimes, indeed, the case is reversed; and it is the peasant, the lady, or the lady's husband, who practises the deception—the knight or clerk who is the dupe.

In these poems, the most common object of ridicule is the "villan," or *peasant*. The characteristics of the knight were, or ought to have been, politeness and gentleness—the manners of the peasant were rude and uncultivated; and hence the latter was to the former a never-ending subject of ridicule and contempt. It is clear from these fabliaux, that the villan sometimes became rich; and here, again, he was an object of ridicule, and no change of fortune could change the perversity of his nature. The characteristics of a gentleman were generosity and liberality; and those of the villan, when he had gained wealth by the sweat of his brow, or by other means, are represented as meanness, and avarice, and arrogance. One of the fabliaux which Barbazan printed, paints strongly and ingeniously the different tastes of the three classes of knights, clerks, and villans. A party of the former pass through a pleasant and shady meadow, surrounded by beautiful scenery; they are enchanted with the prospect, and wish for meat and wine that they might dine on the grass. Soon after them come a party of clerks, whose feelings are also roused by the beauty of the spot: throughout the fabliau the clerk is the seducer of maidens and wives; in this instance, their exclamation was—"Had we but fair maidens here, how pleasant a spot for play!" They, too, passed on, and were followed by a party of villans, who, with a grosser taste, were pleased with the place, and would at once have made of it a water-closet.

The publication of a series of early pieces relating to the character of the villan, which are extremely important to the history of that class of society during the middle ages, was commenced by M. Monmerqué and M. Michel. One of these, a short poem of the thirteenth century, describes the household establishment of the peasant of that time; and another, of the same age, but in prose, gives a laughable enumeration of twenty-three kinds of villans, and of the peculiar characteristic of each. The *piggish villan*, we are there told, is he who labours in the vineyard, and, when a passenger asketh the road, replies, "You know as well as I." The *villan canine* is he who will sit before his door, on festival days and Sundays, to laugh at every one who passes; and if he see a gentleman with a hawk on his fist, he will cry, "Ha! there's a cawing bird, that will have for his supper a-night a fat hen, which would be enough for all my family." The *husky* (?) *villan* (*moussous*) is a frenetic villan, who utterly detesteth God and holy church and all gentility. The *villan asinine* is he who carries to the feast the cake and the barrel of wine: if it be fair weather, he will carry his wife's cloak; if it rain, he will strip himself to his breeches to cover her, that she may not get wet. The *apish villan* is he who stands before Notre Dame, at Paris, and looks at the kings, exclaiming "There is Pepin! there is Charlemagne!" whilst some one behind is cutting his purse. The *prince villan* is one who goes to plead before the bailiff for the other villans, and says, "Sir, in the times of my grandfather and my great-grandfather our cows were in these meadows, our sheep in those copses;" and thus he gains a hundred pence from the villans. The *hooded villan* is the poor married clerk, who goes to labour with the other villans. The *crab-like*

villan is he who returns from the forest laden with wood, and enters his house backwards because the door is too low. The *grafted villan* is he who takes gentle dame to his wife, exactly as if one should graft a fair pear upon a cabbage, or upon a thornbush, or upon a turnip.

From the subject of many of the fabliaux, we might be led to suppose that, in spite of the strong feeling of *caste* which then existed, such union between persons of the two classes were by no means uncommon. The parties are always a peasant, or villan, who has become wealthy, and the daughter of a poor knight, who possesses more beauty than money. The husband is stupid and brutal, the lady cunning and crafty; he is always jealous and suspicious, and (for it was then, as now, the act not of a gentleman but of a boor to strike a woman) he sometimes beat his better-half. She, on the other hand, proves faithless as often as she can find an opportunity; and the writers of the fabliaux seem to think her conduct in this case extremely right and proper. The peasant, indeed, had in their eyes as little right to the possession of such property, as he had to keep hawks or hounds of chase. The frequency of this doctrine, the general character of the stories, and the extreme obscenity with which many of them are filled, give us no high notion of the morality of the gentry (and ladies) before whom they were recited; though it must be confessed, that the most obscene are by no means the most immoral. The grossness of a joke was then no hinderance to its being made public.

It was, after all, a strange texture of mind, that of our forefathers of the middle ages, capable in the same person of presenting, at different times, and under different emotions, an unbounded diversity of character. At one time,

all generosity; at another, giving loose reign to the most merciless cruelty; now, exemplarily pious and devout; and then again giving itself up to the excess of licentiousness. The extremes of obscenity and piety seem, indeed, to have been then by no means difficult of reconciliation; and in the same manuscript, written by the same hand, we often find religious poems mixed with fabliaux equally disgusting. This seems the more extraordinary, when we consider that the greater number of the *contes devots* describe to us the martyrdom to which their heroes and heroines have subjected themselves in defence of their chastity, or their deep penitence for having transgressed it. Their religion, however, was extremely passive; the line of demarcation between right and wrong is not over-distinctly traced; and even the religious stories often give more encouragement to vice than to virtue. For example, on a time, as one of these tales assures us, there was a nun, who performed the duties of sacristan in her nunnery; and she was passingly devout, praying from morn till night to God and to his saints, and, above all, to the Virgin mother, whom she loved and honoured exceedingly. The pious maiden was, at length, overcome by the temptations of the evil one: she left her monastery, and spent two years in unchastity and licentiousness. At the expiration of that term she repented of her follies, returned covered with shame to her monastery, and there found that the "Mother of God," willing, in return for her former devoutness, to give her a fair share of the pleasures of this world, had most obligingly taken her semblance and office during the period of her transgression, to screen her faults from notice. (*De la Sougreteine*, Méon, tom. ii.)

There would be no difficulty in collecting instances of

still greater condescension on the part of Our Lady towards offending members of the community, who had always taken care to keep on good terms with her. There was once a robber, who had especial care, whenever he went forth in search of plunder, to place himself under her ladyship's protection; and, surely enough, he was for a long time entirely successful. However, one day the devil, who, it seems, was not well satisfied with the interference of Our Lady, contrived that the offender, in one of his robberies, should fall into the hands of the justice. The robber had long been an object of fear for his depredations; his offences had been great, and death, as a matter of course, was adjudged to be the punishment he merited. He was dragged to the gallows, amidst the rejoicings of the people; the halter was adjusted to his neck; he was thrown from the scaffold, and left to his fate. But the Virgin was aware of the danger of her faithful servant, and came in haste to his assistance. She placed "her delicate white hands" under his feet as he hung, and supported him for two days, that he sustained neither hurt nor pain. When on the second day his persecutors found him alive, and would have cut his throat with their swords, she placed one of her hands over his throat, and defended that also from their violence. The spectators were astonished at his tenacity of life; he opened his mouth, and explained to them the mystery; they cut him down, and he, leaving his former profession, became a monk in the abbey which stood hard by, and served Our Lady faithfully all his days. (*Du larron qui se commandoit à nostre dame toutes les fois qu'il aloit embler.* Mèon, tom. ii.)

Poetry seems naturally to require a mythology; and the writers of the fabliaux, for whom the popular mythology

of the peasantry had no charms, had imperceptibly and unconsciously formed a system in which the Virgin and her Son, whom they were accustomed to worship beneath the solemn and majestic grandeur of their Gothic churches, took the place of heathen personages, whose characters and attributes were far less virtuous and less holy. The "Lady Mary" of the poets was fair and beautiful—voluptuously beautiful; and they dwelt with delight on her eyes, and her mouth, and her tresses—on her delicate feet and hands, on the whiteness of her skin, and on the elegance of her form. She was even the patroness of love—a true Venus; and she exacted that worship and that homage which, as such, were due to her. In a fabliau entitled the *Court of Paradise*, printed in Barbazan, a rich festival is described as being celebrated among the saints of both sexes; and there the virgin and the 'madelaine' lead the dance, singing as they go, "*Tuit cil qui sont enamourez viengnent danssier, li autre non*"—Let all who are in love come and dance, and no others. And the ladies and maidens instantly join in chanting, "*Je gart le bos, que nus n'en port chapel de flors s'il n'aime*"—I guard the wood, that none take a chaplet of flowers unless he be in love. Many similar chants are sung; and at last Christ kisses the Virgin on the eyes, mouth, and cheeks, "which were both delicate and beautiful—more so than is the rose in its bloom."

"A cest mot la bese en la face.
Les iex, la bouche, et la maiselle,
Que ele avoit et tendre et bele
Plas que ne n'est rose espanie." (*l.* 569.)

The *conte devot* of the monk who made the image of

the devil, begins by telling us, that all who were in love should assemble in a meadow below Bethlehem; "for the god of love will go there to prove his friends, and he will know who has a sweetheart: he that has none had better keep away."

"Desouz Bethléem en uns prez
Venez avant vos qui amez,
Li diex d'amor i velt aler
Qui ses amis velt esprover,
Et velt savoir qni a amie;
Et vos fuiez qui n'amez mie." (*Méon*, tom. ii.)

Some young men, as one of these *contes* tells us, were playing at ball near a church, in the porch of which was a beautiful statue of Our Lady; one of them, a handsome fellow, who had a sweetheart in the town whom he loved tenderly, approached the portal to lay down a ring, which the fair object of his affections had given him, from his finger, while he played. There he saw the image, which was "fresh and new," became suddenly enamoured of it, and, after due obeisance, addressed Our Lady thus:

" 'Dame,' fet-il, 'en mon aage,
D'ore en avant vous servirai,
Car onques mais ne remirai,
Dame, meschine, ne pucele,
Qui tant me fust plesant ne bele;
Tu iez plus bele et plus plesans
Que cele n'est cent mile tans,
Qui cest anel m'avoit doné:
Je li avoie habandoné
Tot mon corage, et tot mon cuer;
Mès por t'amor veil giter puer
Li et s'amor et ses joiaus.
Cest anel ci qui moult est biaus,

Te veil doner par fine amor,
Par tel couvent, que jà nul jor
N'arai mais amie ne fame,
Se vous non, bele douce dame.' "

"'Lady,' he said, 'I promise duly,
That all my life I'll serve thee truly;
For never saw I maiden fair
Whose beauty could with thine compare,
So courtly and so debonaire:
And she who gave this ring to me,
Though fair and sweet herself, than thee
A hundred times less fair, I trow,
Shall yield to thee her empire now.
'Tis true I've loved her long, and well,
As many a fond caress may tell;
But now, forgotten and neglected,
Her meaner charms for thine rejected,
I give her ring a lasting token
Of faith which never shall be broken,
Nor shared with maid or wife shall be
The love I proffer unto thee.' "

(*Du varlet qui se maria à Nostre Dame*, *l.* 42, Barbazan, tom. ii.)

So saying, he placed the ring on Our Lady's finger. She was flattered, it seems, by the conquest she had made, and, in token of acceptance, bent the finger on which was the ring, so that the latter could not again be withdrawn. The lover, astounded at the miracle, ran to his companions, who counselled him to retire from the world, and to give himself up entirely to his new spouse. He, however, neglected the advice of his friends, soon forgot the circumstance himself, and, his old attachment returning in all its force, he married the maiden who had given him the ring. Our

Lady was not so easily to be robbed of her husband: on the wedding-night, when he would have approached his lady in bed, the Virgin Mary threw him suddenly into a slumber, and then she herself appeared to him lying between them.

" Le doy monstroit à tout l'anel,
Qui merveille li séoit bel,
Car li dois ert polis et drois.
' Ce ne'st mie,' fet-ele, ' drois,
Ne loyauté que tu me fais,
Ledement t'ies vers moi meffais.
Vez ici l'anel à t'amie
Que me donas par druerie,
Et si disoies que cent tans
Ere plus bele et plus plesans
Que pucele que tu séusses.
Loiale amie en moi éusses,
Se ne m'éusses deguerpie:
La rose lesse pour l'ortie,
Et l'esglantier por le séu.' "

" She show'd him straight her finger, where
Was still the ring he'd given her;
And well became her hand that ring
Upon her soft skin glittering.
' Instead of love, thou'st shown,' said she,
' But falseness and disloyalty.
And ill has kept thy faith to me.
Behold the ring thou gavest, for token
And pledge of love for ever unbroken,
And call'd me a hundred times more fair
Than ever earthly maidens were.
I have been ever true, but thou
Hast taken a meaner lemman now;
Hast left for stinking nettle the rose,
Sweet eglantine for flower more gross.'" (*Id. l.* 113.)

Our Lady, in the end, forced him to leave his wife, and to dedicate himself unto her. It must not be forgotten that the original story, as it figures in the chronicles and in another fabliau, is a tale of magic, and that there the representative of Mary is the "Lady Venus," who, someway or other, had been dragged into the middle-age superstitions.

In the legends of the monks, the hermits and other religious are people of a nature altogether cold and devoid of passions; and the temptations to frailty, in regard of the other sex, are not very great:—the way in which the evil one most generally overcomes them is by sheer fright. Not so in the tales of the poets: there the devil does more with a fair word and a fair face, than he ever did in the other case with his legions of fiends. The hermits and monks of the fabliaux are, in fact, extremely susceptible of tender emotions, though their trials and temptations are sometimes very droll, and generally fall out to their disadvantage. The hermit of one of the *contes devots* arrives at the house of a noble lady, is entertained with a plentiful and rich supper, and is afterwards led to a magnificent chamber to sleep. To his surprise, the lady undresses herself, enters the same bed, and places herself by his side. At first, the hermit was modest, and begged the lady to leave the bed, or to suffer him to leave it. She replied by close embraces. She was young and beautiful, and the stoicism of the hermit was speedily melted down. When, however, he sought the full gratification of his desires, the lady requested that he would first grant her a favour. She took him to the foot of the bed and placed him in a cistern of marble, which was full of cold water. The season, as it appears, was not summer, and, before she allowed him to leave his bath, the hermit

was almost dead with cold, and, as might be supposed, in no humour to accept her now proffered favours. When, recovered from the effects of his bath, he began again to make advances to the lady, he was led a second time to the marble cistern, and the experiment was repeated till morning; when he arose, confessed the wickedness of his desires, and declared that his fair hostess was worthy of an eternal crown in Paradise.

> "Et vous, dame, dont paradis,
> Et coronne aurez à tous diz."

His admiration was, however, vastly increased, when he learnt from the dame that in the same manner she treated her husband every night, in order that they might both secure places in that desirable region. (*Du prévost d'Aquilée.* Méon, tom. ii.)

Certain it is, that the evil one, whenever either desirous of overthrowing their sanctity, or enraged at the obstinacy and rudeness of his monkish opponents, seldom wanted a fair dame or a yielding maiden who was ready enough to become the instrument of his malice or his revenge. At a certain abbey were a number of workmen, carving, in stones, figures of saints and devils; and the sacristan, who was looking on, took a strange fancy of carving a devil himself. To work he went, with hammer and chisel, and, by great care and study, he succeeded in making a fiend so passingly ugly, that no person could look at it without terror. Delighted with his performance, he retired to his couch perfectly satisfied with himself; but at midnight he was roused from his slumber by a terrible noise in his cell, and, lo! there was the evil one himself. "Wretch!" cried he, "why hast thou made me so ugly?" and he threatened the poor

monk vehemently, unless he would promise to mend his work. Three nights did the devil renew his visit, with menaces more dreadful every time; and always was he defeated and put to flight by the brother's holy water. In the neighbourhood dwelt a fair dame, who was a widow, and whom the devil filled with love for the sacristan; he raised a corresponding feeling in the latter: they were quickly brought together; and at last the lady persuaded him one night to steal all the plate and jewels of the abbey, and to fly with her into a distant land. The sacristan, laden with the plunder, was on the way to join his mistress, when the devil entered the abbey, awakened the whole fraternity, and announced that the abbey had been robbed. The monks left their beds in haste, overtook the offender, and put him in prison. The devil again appeared before the sacristan, reproached him for his former obstinacy, and promised still to deliver him, provided he would promise to deface his image, and make one handsomer in its place. The monk agreed willingly to the proposal, the tempter took his place in the dungeon, and he sought his couch; and next morning, when the monks found him quietly performing his duties in the chapel, and would have led him back to prison, he professed an entire ignorance of what had passed. They immediately, suspecting that some delusion had been played upon them, went to the prison, found there the evil one in the garb of a sacristan, and instantly came the father-abbot, fearfully armed with cross and holy-water, to put the enemy to confusion.

" D'els s'esvanoui erraument,
Si s'en torna par un auvent
De la meson, si la hurta
Que devant soi l'acraventa.

Un moine prist, si l'emportoit,
Par le chaperon le tenoit:
Quand le chaperon destacha
Par le moine, qui trop pesa,
Si li eschapa de la main
Et cil avala sanz poïain,
Si que seur ses freres versa,
Que ne sai quanz en enversa."

"From holy cross quick fled the devil
(The monks I guess were not o'er civil):
Against the wall he stumbled, souse!
Knock'd down a corner of the house,
And then as 'twere in vengeful mood,
Snatch'd up a brother by the hood.
The monk himself was fat and heavy
(Perchance the largest of the bevy);
His hood gave way, and, sad to tell,
Right on his brethren's heads he fell,
Who, as they stared in sore confusion,
Were all knocked down by the concussion."
(*D'un moine qui countrefist l'ymage du deable*, v. 417. *Méon*, tom. ii.)

The monks then hastened to the monastery, to apologise to the sacristan for the evil opinion they had formed of him; and the latter, according to his promise, brake in pieces his ugly devil, and laboured hard to form one which might be less objectionable to the personage whom it represented.

Whatever, indeed, may have been the doctrine which the monks and the moralists of the thirteenth century preached, it would not seem to have been confirmed by their practice; and unchastity was certainly not regarded as one of the greatest of sins. When either knight, or

monk, or villan, in his amorous adventures, is entrapped and punished, the poet censures not the sin he had, or would have committed, but the want of care with which he had conducted the enterprise.

One evening came a poor scholar to the house of a miller, to seek a lodging for the night. The dame (for the goodman was not at home) sent him away, to seek shelter elsewhere. While the scholar was at the door, he observed a lad bring three vessels of wine, which were immediately taken in and concealed; and the maid also hid a cake, newly baked, and a fine piece of pork, which she had taken from the pot; and as he left the place he met a priest, who passed him and entered the house. Soon after, he met the miller himself, who was returning, somewhat unexpectedly, with flour from the mill. When the scholar told the miller that he had been refused at the house hard by, and that he wanted shelter for the night, the latter swore by St. Clement that the house was his own, and at the same time invited him to return, promising him hospitable entertainment. When the miller and his new friend arrived at the house, the wife, hearing that it was her husband who knocked, after having in haste concealed the priest, with a promise to send her husband to bed as quickly as possible, opened the door. The dame declared that she had nothing for them to eat, and that, if they were hungry, the miller must give the maid some flour to make a loaf. The miller, vexed exceedingly, saw no alternative, and begged of his guest to tell him, in the meanwhile, a fable or a story, of which he doubted not that he knew many. "Of fables," replied the scholar, "I know none; but I will tell you a 'fear' which I have had."

"Proceed," said the miller.

"To-day" said the scholar, "I passed by a wood, and saw a large herd of pigs of all sizes: but the drover was not there. While I was watching the pigs, a wolf rushed suddenly among them, large and fat: yea, as fat as that piece of pork which your maid took just now out of the pot."

"What!" cried the miller, eagerly, "have we pork in the house?"

"Yes," replied the wife, disconcerted and mortified; "a fine piece, which I have bought purposely for you."

"It is well," said the husband; "I could have desired nothing better. And now, friend, proceed with thy story."

"The wolf of which I spoke," continued the speaker, "seized instantly one of the pigs, tore it in pieces, and began to eat it. I looked at one large piece—the blood ran from it, all red; yea, as red as the wine which the lad brought to thy house, when I came this evening to seek a lodging."

"Heigh, wife! have we wine also?"

"Yea, plenty, and good: I thought of you and ordered it."

"I am glad," said the husband; "we shall be able to treat our guest well. Proceed!"

"When I saw that the wolf was so fierce, I looked for something to throw at him; and I took up a large stone—as large, I believe, as the cake which the maid took from the fire a short time ago."

The dame saw now that it was useless to think of concealing anything, and, hoping that when all the eatables were produced the scholar would say no more, brought them forth, and arranged the table.

"Now," said the miller, "as we have plenty of provisions, let us sup. Is thy fear ended?"

"Not entirely," said his guest; "for I would have thrown the stone at the wolf, but, lo! he gave me a look like—exactly like that of the priest who is hidden in the corner under the window."

"What!" exclaimed the host, "have we a priest here, too? Where is he?" And he arose from his seat, dragged the priest from his hiding-place, and, after taking from him his robe, his coat, and his cap, which he gave to the clerk as a remuneration for his story, turned him out of doors. The host then repeated his thanks to the guest for his "fear," which had produced them so jovial a supper; and they passed the evening full merrily together.* The writer of the fabliau blames the lady much; not, however, for being false to her husband, but for having been so inhospitable to the poor scholar, who, had she treated him more kindly, would certainly have said nothing of what he had seen.

"Et à la dame tot première,
Qui au clerc fist si laide chière
Quant il oustel li demanda,
De quanque il la nuit conta,
N'aüst-il jà un mot soné,
S'el li aüst l'ostel presté." (*l.* 248.)

'And first I blame the lady, who
Bade the poor clerk, unpitied, go,
When he demanded shelter there;
For, had she shown him better cheer,
He had not told a word, I ween,
Of all that he had heard or seen."

* The reader will perceive at once, that this fabliau is the foundation of Dunbar's "*Freres of Berwick.*"

So lax, indeed, were their notions upon this subject, that some of the moralists of these times taught, that it was greater sin to trespass with an ugly woman than with one who was fair. In a satire entitled *La Bible au Seignor de Berze*, which is printed in Barbazan, this doctrine is duly set forth. The wickedness of love, its writer assures us, is, that we are apt to think of our mistress when we ought to be thinking of something else.

"Tel i a or qui cuideroit
C'on se peust miex amender
D'amors de bele dame amer,
Que de la laide, et il est voirs,
Qar li lais pechiez est plus noirs
Et plus vil et plus despiteus;
Mès li biaus est plus deliteus,
Et plus plesens à remembrer,
Fors qu'est peril à amender,
Puis c'on a fet la dessevrance
Du pechié de la remembrance,
N'i devons mès point de delit,
Ainz a-l'en en son cuer despit,
Et s'en est-l'en bien repentans
Que du biau pechié bien cent tans.
Mès que repentir s'en porroit
Du biau pechié, il en auroit
Cent itant du gré que du let." (*l.* 748.)

"But many judge the blame is less
To sin with beauteous dame, than 'tis
To be entrapped by ugliness;
Nor is their judgment here amiss:
For this is crime of blacker die,
Filthier and beastlier luxury,
As he who errs without temptation
Merits a deadlier damnation.

Not so the sweeter sin: and yet,
I judge 'tis harder to forget
The beauteous object than the other:
And could we the remembrance smother
Of that which captivates, and ever
The sweetness from the sin dissever,
Then penitence would soon appear.
But yet a hundred times, 'tis clear,
More grateful is that penitence,
When fairer dame provoked th' offence."

However, Hugh de Bersil, the author of the piece, declares that he is a fool who commits the sin in either case —with the fair lady or with the foul.

As poetry of their peculiar class, the fabliaux of the thirteenth century are by no means to be despised: the stories are always well told; they are full of wit, and frequently rival the happiest effusions of La Fontaine or Prior. Indeed, the originals of many of La Fontaine's tales are to be found amongst them. The works of the Norman bards are not deficient in passages which breathe the true spirit of poetry: the fault of the romances—and this is a fault under which the fabliaux never labour—is, that they are too diffuse; that the aim of the writer seems often to have been the making his poem as lengthy as possible; and, consequently, that that which would otherwise be perfect is spoiled by being dwelt upon too long, or is rendered tedious by being repeated too often. In this point, the character of Norman poetry differs widely from that of the Anglo-Saxons; which is, perhaps, as faulty in the multitude of images which are crowded together in close succession on the mind.

A large portion of the Anglo-Norman and French poetry

of the middle ages is anonymous. Many names of writers have, however, been preserved, although we know little of their lives and characters, except that they mostly belonged to the merry and reckless class of *jongleurs*. Some of them were prolific writers, such as Rutebeuf, whose works have recently been collected into two 8vo volumes, by M. Achille Jubinal, and form a very valuable illustration of the literary history of the thirteenth century. They are full of variety, for no one of his age has written so much about himself, and about almost every person and everything he knew, as *mestre* Rutebeuf. A bitter enemy to all the monastic orders, he attacks and criticises them in every shape, and he is supposed to have suffered for his zeal. A warm partisan of the university of Paris, in the dissensions which distracted its members during the century in which he flourished, he has left us many songs and satires on the subject, which give us much popular information on the manners and studies of the scholars of that day, as well as many private traits of the distinguished men engaged in these quarrels. The prevailing subject of his enthusiasm were the crusades; and his exhortations to take the cross and hasten to the rescue of Jerusalem, throw a new light on the general feeling of the reign of St. Louis on this subject. Few of Rutebeuf's poems are more interesting than those which relate to his own griefs; we there see a picture of the domestic life of a former age, and of the condition and character of the votaries of the muse, such as no other documents afford.

Rutebeuf appears to have been a native of Paris. M. Jubinal conjectures that he was born about 1235, or between that year and 1240, and that the date of his

death must be placed about the year 1286. He was by profession a minstrel; and he informs us that he was in the habit of attending marriages and tournaments, and, no doubt, other festivals; and that he was given to dice, to which, in some measure at least, he owed the poverty and misery of which he so often complains. The poem with which the first volume opens is entitled, "*Of Rutebeuf's poverty*" (*c'est de la povretei Rutebeuf*), and is addressed to St. Louis, then abroad on his second crusade: the poet complains that his favourite crusades had brought two evils upon himself, in carrying away all the "gentil chevaliers" who used to make the minstrel joyful by their gifts, and at the same time causing a dearness of provisions and all other things, at the time when he was least able to buy. The account he gives of his own misery in this piece is certainly touching, and we cannot but think it is a little exaggerated. A literal version will here best convey the spirit and feeling of the original.

"Je touz de froit, de fain baaile,
Dont je sui mors et maubailliz.
Je suis sanz coutes et sans liz;
N'a si povre juqu'à Senliz.
Sire, si ne sai quel part aille;
Mes costeiz connoit le pailliz,
Et liz de paille n'est pas liz.
Et en mon lit n'a fors la paille."

"I cough with cold, and yawn with hunger,
With which I am nigh dead and in ill case.
I am without frock, and without bed;
There is none so poor from here to Senlis.

Sire, I know not where to turn me:
My side is acquainted with the hard mattress,
And a bed of straw is not smooth,
Though in my bed there is nothing else."

" 'Sire, je vos fais a savoir,
Je n'ai de quoi do pain avoir:
A Paris sui entre touz biens,
Et n'i a nul qui i soit miens."

" 'Sire, I beg to inform you,
I have not wherewith to buy bread:
At Paris I am among all good things,
And there is not one that I possess."

He ends with a joke upon his own misfortunes:

" Bien sai *Pater*, ne sai qu'est *notre*,
Que li chiers tenz m'a tot hostei,
Qu'il m'a si vuidié mon hostei
Que li *Credo* m'est dévéeiz,
Et je n'ai plus que vos véeiz "

" I know *Pater* well, but I know not what is *noster*,
For the dear season has deprived me of all,
And has so entirely emptied my house,
That the *Credo* is forbidden me,
And I have nothing more than you see."

Credo was the title of the Creed, and meant also in the Latin of that time, *I trust you*, or *give you credit*; Rutebeuf puns on the word, and means that he has nothing to pawn, and cannot live upon credit. To explain the first line, it is only necessary to say, that the poet had a family, which was a burden to him in his

misfortunes; and his next poem is a complaint on his marriage, which he tells us took place in the year 1260. This piece, also, is a continued lamentation over his poverty, though he again shows himself a confirmed punster.

"Or me covient froter au lange;
Je ne dout privé ne estrange
Que il riens m'emble;
N'ai pas busche de chesne ensamble:
Quant g'i sui si à fou et tramble.

N'est-ce assez?
Mes pos est brisiez et quassez.
Et j'ai toz mes bons jors passez.
Je qu'em diroie?
Ni la destruction de Troie
Ne fu si grant comme est la moie!"

"I have not a shirt to my back;
I fear neither acquaintance nor stranger
Stealing anything from me:
I have not two logs of oak together:
And am thus mad and trembling (*with cold and hunger.*)

"Is this not enough?
My pot is broken and smashed,
And all my good days are passed.
What should I say of it?
Not even the destruction of Troy
Was so great as is mine."

In the original, the fourth and fifth lines of this extract admit of two interpretations,—the translation just given is of course the one primarily intended, but they also, in

a *double-entendre,* allow of being thus interpreted: "I have not *two lôys of oak* together, because I am there with nothing but *beech* (fou, from *fagus*) *and aspen wood* (tremble.)" These extracts will give a tolerable idea of the position and character of the poet. Several other poems describe his wretchedness and misfortunes. He certainly had many friends and benefactors, by his own confession; and though his poetry is often playful, and sometimes very poor, yet it is also very frequently dignified, and his satire is bold and pungent.

Besides occasional allusions in various parts of his works, Rutebeuf has left us five poems on the subject of the crusades; urging warmly the policy of undertaking and entering into these wars, and supporting his remonstrances by reasons that seemed, we have no doubt, very conclusive at that time. One of these poems introduces two knights, a Crusader and one who had declined taking the cross, arguing the subject, and, although the poet gives the palm to the former, the arguments of the other, put in his mouth by one who was prejudiced on the contrary side, are in our opinion by much the most forcible. Some of them are singular enough:—

"Clerc et prêlat doivent vengier
La honte Dieu, qu'il ont ces rentes.
Il ont à boivre et à mengier:
Si ne lor chaut c'il pluet où vente.
* * * *
Dites le soudant vostre meistre
Que je pris pou son menacier:
S'il vient desà, mal me vit neistre,
Mais lai ne l'irai pas chacier.
* * * *

Sire croiziez, merveilles voi;
Mult vont outre meir gent menue,
Sage, large, de grant aroi,
De bien metable convenue,
Et bien i font, si com je croi,
Dont l'arme est por meilleur tenue;
Si ne valent ne ce ne quoi
Quand ce vient à la revenue.

Se Diex est nule part el monde,
Il est en France, c'est sens doute;
Ne cuidiez pas qu'il se reponde
Entre gent que ne l'aimment goute."

"Clercs and prelates ought to avenge
God's cause, when they have his rents.
They have plenty to eat and drink;
So they care neither for rain nor wind.
* * * *
Tell your master the soldan
That I reckon little of his threats:
If he come here it will be ill with him,
But I will not go there to seek him.
* * * *
Sir crusader, I observe wonders;
Great multitudes of people go over sea,
Wise, generous, of great array,
Of very good behaviour;
And they do well there, as I believe,
For which their soul is esteemed better;
Yet they are not a bit more worthy
When they come back again.

If God is anywhere in the world,
He is in France, without any doubt:
Do not believe he would take up his abode
Among people who hate him."

In other pieces Rutebeuf breaks out into exclamations of the deepest indignation against those who prefer their pleasures and comforts at home, to buying paradise by risking their lives in war against the infidels; and his anger is particularly excited by the corruptions and vices of the clergy, which he represents as a great hinderance to the success of the crusader.

Indeed the minstrel shows himself everywhere a bitter satirist upon ecclesiastics, and in this respect he identifies himself entirely with the popular feeling of the age. The religious orders, which were multiplying so rapidly during the reign of the pious Louis, are all and each visited with the lash. It was they who enriched themselves with the goods of the wealthy knights, whom they persuaded to go to war in the east; they rolled in riches and worldly comforts, while the laity in general were pressed down by heavy imposts and dear times; it was they who were lifting up the papal power against the best interests of the king and the state, and in return the pope was supporting them against the university and the civil institutions. The Jacobins, in particular, had provoked his wrath by their successful hostility against the university and its champion William de Saint-Amour.

"Quant Jacobin vindrent el monde,
S'entrèrent chiés Humilité:
Lors estoient et net et moïde
Et s'amoient Divinité;
Mès Orguex, qui toz biens esmonde,
I a tant mis iniquité,
Que par lor grant chape roonde
Ont versé l'Université.
* * * *

Jacobin sont venu el monde
Vestu de robe blanche et noire :
Toute bontez en els abonde,
Ce puet quiçonques voudra croire.
Se par l'abit sont net et monde,
Vous savez bien, ce est la voire,
S'uns leus avoit chape roonde,
Si resambleroit-il provoire."

"When Jacobins came into the world,
They took lodgings with Humility ;
Then were they pure and clean,
And loved Divinity ;
But Pride, who scatters all good,
Has so filled them with iniquity,
That with their great round cape
They have upset the university.
* * * *
Jacobins came into the world
Clad in robe of white and black :
All virtues abound in them—
He may believe it that will.
In sooth their dress is neat and clean,
You know well that it is true,
That if a wolf had a round cape,
He'd look mightily like a priest."

(*La descorde de l'université et des Jacobins.*)

In a piece entitled *Les ordres de Paris*, Rutebeuf attacks the Jacobins again, and accuses them of overbearing behaviour, and of taking advantage of the opportunity afforded them by their occupation, to put themselves into rich men's wills :

" Li Jacobin sont si preudoume
Qu'il ont Paris et si ont Roume,
Et si sont roi et apostole,
Et de l'avoir ont-il grant soume.
Et qui se muert, se il ne 's noume
Pour exécuteurs, s'ame afole !
Et sont apostre par parole."

" The Jacobins are such politic folk,
That they are masters of Paris and Rome,
And in truth are both kings and popes,
And are laden with wealth.
And he who dies, if he does not name them
His executors, he loses his soul:
And in speech they are very apostles."

In the same piece, the minstrel satirizes the king for his foundation of the Hospital des Quinze-Vingts, by the rue St. Honoré.

" Li rois a mis en .i. repaire,
Mais ne sai pas bien porquoi faire,
Trois cens aveugles route à route.
Parmi Paris en vat trois paire;
Toute jour ne finent de braire
' Au .iij. cens qui ne voient goute !'
Li uns sache, li autre boute;
Si se donent mainte sacoute,
Qu'il n'i at nul qui lor esclaire.
Si fex i prent, se n'est pas doute,
L'ordre sera brullée toute;
S'aura li Rois plus à refaire."

" The king has placed in a dwelling,
Though I don't know what for,
Three hundred blind men in troops.
Three pair wander about Paris;

The whole day they cease not to roar,
'Charity for the three hundred who are stone-blind!
One shakes, another pushes,
And so they give one another many a shake,
Because nobody gives them light.
If their house take fire, without doubt,
The whole order will be burnt together:
Then may the king set about making more orders."

Rutebeuf never lets slip an opportunity of putting in a sly reflection on his monkish opponents. In a fabliau, where he is describing the sacristan of a monastery, who was extremely pious and virtuous, he omits not to tell us that "when people offered candles to the Virgin, he failed not to let them burn, and *never put them out in order to reserve them for his own use*, unless it were the *large ones*, of which he preserved a reasonable portion for the good of the monastery."

"Quant la chandoile estoit esprise
Devant la Virge debonère,
De l'oster n'avoit-il que fère:
Tout ardoit, n'i remanoit point.
Je ne di pas s'il fust à point
Que plains li chandelabres fust
Ou li granz chandeliers de fust,
Il en otast jusqu'à reson,
Qui fesoit bien à la meson."
(*Dou secrestain et de la femme au chevalier.*)

ESSAY III.

THE CHANSONS DE GESTE, OR HISTORICAL ROMANCES OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

COME listen to an old and true song, a famous history of marvellous value, how the Vandals invaded our land. Miserably had they reduced our holy faith, slain our people, and wasted our country. Rheims had they destroyed, and Paris they besieged; they slew Saint Nicaise of Rheims, and Saint Maurice of Cambrai with seven thousand knights of his company, who were true martyrs for the sake of Jesus.

"Vielle chanson voire volez oïr
De grant istoire et de mervillous pris,
Si com li Wandre vinrent en cest pais.
Crestienté ont malement bailli,
Les homes morts et art tout le pais;
Destruirent Rains et assisrent Paris,
Et sains Nicaises de Rains i fut ocis,
Et sains Morises de Cambrai la fort cit,
Uns grans seigneurs, si com la chanson dit,
En sa compaigne de chevaliers sept mil
Qui por Jesu furent verai martir."

Thus commences the romantic cycle of the history of Garin the Lorrain and his family, composed by the trouvère Jehan de Flagy.

Charles Martel could no longer oppose the progress of these invaders, for the strength of his kingdom was reduced by internal as well as by external causes. His subjects had been persuaded to neglect their own relatives on the approach of death; and they gave to the black monks of the order of Saint Benet all their lands and their rents and their mills, leaving nothing to their sons and daughters. The nation was thus impoverished, and its riches thrown into the hands of the clergy.

A council was held at Lyons, where Charles conferred with the pope and three thousand of the clergy. He had with him more than twenty thousand knights, but they were unarmed and without horses, and few were men of years and experience. "Sire Apostle," said the emperor, "for the sake of Him who died on the cross, have pity upon me, and upon these my knights in our extremity. My land is burnt and destroyed, my castles broken down, the monasteries profaned, and my clergy, with their bishops and archbishops, slain without mercy. I have here about twenty thousand knights, who possess neither arms nor steeds. Take good counsel, that they may be enabled to defend themselves, or I will give up the nation to you to guard it as you can." The pope proposed that the church should give some small part of its riches to support the war against the pagans, but the proud archbishop of Rheims swore, "by the faith which he owed to St. Martin," that he would not consent to subscribe a penny to any such secular purposes, and it was not without much opposition that Charles at last obtained the loan of the tithes of the church, with which he speedily armed and furnished forty thousand men.

Meanwhile Troyes was besieged by one hundred thousand

infidels, and another army, equally numerous, lay before Paris, to which latter place Charles Martel advanced with his host, attended by his trusty liege, Hervi of Lorraine. Hervi pushed forward with his Lorrains; encountered and defeated the enemies before the arrival of the emperor, having slain in the engagement one of their kings, "Charboncle, a king of the Saracens," who had formerly killed his cousin, a knight of Metz; and the infidels fled towards Sens and Soissons, losing by the way at Pont-Girbert, where Hervi again lay in wait for them, more than three thousand men.

Soon after this battle, while Hervi was at Paris with the emperor and his queen and young Pepin, tidings arrived that the pagans were in host at Troyes and before Sens, and that they had ravaged the vale of Soissons, and had slain the archbishop of Rheims. The consultation on this message was short:—"What shall we do?" said the king to Hervi. "With God's aid, we will go:" was the answer;* and the army was in motion at the break of the following morn, when suddenly a second messenger appeared from Sens, the inhabitants of which prayed for immediate aid against another army of pagans, who cruelly ravaged their district. The emperor, accordingly, divided his host, sending duke Hervi with his Lorrains to the valley of Soissons, while he hastened with the French to Sens. The duke defeated the Saracens and drove them from Soissons, but the

* "Un mes en vint droitement à Charlon;
'En non Dieu, sire, cis del val de Sissons
Ont desconfit Paien et Esclavon;
Ta terre metent en feu et en charbon.'
Et dit li rois; 'Hervis, que là ferons?'
Respont li dux: 'Se Diex plaist, nos irons.'" (p. 17.)

emperor was less fortunate. In the night he had attacked and defeated the infidels before Sens, and had pursued them to their grand host which lay before Troyes, where, overcome by numbers, his army was only saved from discomfiture by the sudden arrival of Hervi, who had hastened forwards to join him after the flight of the enemy from Soissons. The duke immediately made a new attack upon the Saracens, slew three of their kings and twenty thousand of their men, and pursued them three leagues and a half from he city. After the battle, he carried Charles, who was mortally wounded, to Paris, where he died, and was buried in the monastery of St. Denys: and, calling together the turbulent barons who held their fiefs of the Frankish monarch, in spite of the opposition of many of them, he caused the young prince Pepin to be crowned and acknowledged as king. After having recommended the new monarch to the guardianship of Hardré, he returned to his own territory, where he married Aelis, the sister of the noble knight Gaudin, who in the course of two years bore him as many sons, the first of whom was called Garin, and was duke after the death of his father; and the second, who was called Begues, had the castle and territory of Belin. He had also seven daughters, who were all married to noble and worthy knights.

In the meantime the Hungarians (*Hongres*), "que Diex puist maléir," entered the territory of the duke Hervi, which they ravaged with fire and sword, and laid siege to his town of Metz. Unable singly to make head against such powerful invaders, the duke sought aid at the court of Pepin, whom he found with Hardré and Amauri:—"There was no greater rascal on this side the

river Rhine, may he destroy them who confounded Cain! * * There were no such rascals in sixty lands."

> " N'ot plus felon jusqu'à l'esve del Rin,
> Cis les destruie qui confondit Caïn !—
> N'ot si felons en soisante païs." (pp. 52-3.)

They persuaded the king to refuse the aid which the Lorrain sought, and to advise him to seek assistance amongst his own kinsmen. Disappointed and mortified at the emperor's ingratitude, he withdrew his fief from the Frankish monarch, went to Cologne, and there offered to hold it of king Anséis, on condition that the latter should give him immediate and sufficient aid. The offer was accepted; Anséis in person accompanied duke Hervi to the war, and the infidels were entirely defeated, but in the pursuit the duke was slain by an arrow. Anséis was at first embarrassed by this accident, but, fearing to lose the advantage which his situation had given him, he suddenly seized upon the city of Metz, though not before Berengier, the tutor of Garin and Begues, Hervi's sons, had mounted them both and escaped with them towards Châlons in Champagne, where he placed them under the care of the bishop, who was their uncle.

One Pentecost, when Pepin held a court at Mont-Loon, the bishop Henry presented his two wards, who had now been under his care seven years and a half, to the emperor, who received them graciously, and put them under the guardianship of Hardré. The latter placed them as the companions (*compains*) of his two sons —Begues, the younger, being the companion of William, and Garin of his brother Fromont. The king loved much the two

young Lorrains, particularly Begues, to whom he gave the whole of Gascony, a gift which displeased much the jealous Hardré; and, at a court held at Langres, he knighted them both, and, at the same time, their two companions. Shortly afterwards, the two brothers signalized themselves in an expedition against the Normans, who had invaded France, and caused duke Richard to make reparation to the king. In reward for this service, the latter obtained for them the restoration of their patrimony, which had been so long usurped by the king of Cologne.

While the brothers were still young, and were at Paris with the court, tidings arrived that four Saracen kings had entered Provence, Auvergne, and Savoy, and how they were at Valprofonde, where they had besieged king Thierry in his capital. Thierry sent a messenger in haste to demand aid of the emperor, but Hardré had counselled him to consult rather his own ease, and to leave Thierry to his fate until the following spring; and the messenger was about to return with this sinister response, when Pepin's resolution was changed by the pressing supplications of Garin and Begues and their companions. The army was accordingly assembled, and was far advanced on the road towards Valprofonde, when the heat, for it was summer, threw the king into a serious illness. He was again on the point of listening to Hardré's advice to desert Thierry, and would have disbanded his army, but Garin, with Begues, Fromont, William, and Bernard of Naisil, entered the royal chamber, and expostulated with him, the former offering to lead the expedition himself, whilst the king returned to Paris for the recovery of his health. The king accepted Garin's offer, gave him the chief command of the army, and they advanced speedily to the relief of king Thierry, when, as they

approached the enemy, a new difficulty arose;—Fromont, fearful of the superior numbers of the infidels, refused to advance to the combat. In vain Garin urged the oath which they had all taken to obey his superior command; Fromont departed with his friends and retainers, and Garin, with Begues and the remainder of the army, approached Valprofonde, having first dispatched a messenger to king Thierry, urging him to fall suddenly upon the Saracens' rear, whilst he attacked them in front. The Lorrains fought gallantly; the Saracens were entirely defeated; and, after the battle, Fromont and his companions, who had stood aloof to see the result, came forwards and laid claim to their share of the spoils, a claim which was naturally refused. Hence began the hatred and dissensions which lasted so long between the families of Fromont and Garin. The rich king Thierry was mortally wounded in the battle; on his death at Valprofonde, he betrothed Blancheflor, his only child, to Garin, leaving for her dower all his possessions and treasures, and the Lorrain received, in her father's presence, the fealty of his subjects.

The war was now ended, and all the barons and knights returned to their own castles, except Fromont and Garin, who went together to the court, where the latter was received by Pepin with every mark of respect. Garin told the king the result of the war, and how the king Thierry was dead, and had given him his daughter and his territory, and how he had accepted both only on the condition of their being agreeable to his superior sovereign. Pepin immediately ratified the gift; but Fromont, swelling with ire and envy, forbad the alliance, declaring that when the king had given the duchy of Gascony to Begues, he had promised him the first fief that should become vacant, in

fulfilment of which promise he now demanded the lands of king Thierry. Pepin represented to him that this was a gift from father to child, and Garin himself expostulated mildly; but Fromont made use of rude threats against his person, which so irritated the Lorrain that he would have struck him with his fist, had not Pepin held him back by the hem of his mantle. Both parties now uttered bitter recriminations, till Fromont, rushing upon Garin, was received by a blow on the head which laid him prostrate on the ground. The Bordelais, who were much more numerous in the court than the Lorrains, came to the assistance of their chieftain; the king was young and weak, and his orders were not heeded; and Hardré himself, who was in his chamber at the time, seized his sword, and hastened to encourage his own men. Fourteen of the Lorrains were killed, and the rest were driven out of the palace, which was strongly barricaded; and Hardré would have put to death Garin, who defended himself as well as he could against his numerous adversaries, had not timely aid arrived.

It chanced that the nephew of Garin, Hernaïs of Orleans, with his brother, the bishop Huedon, and a company of seven thousand knights, was on his way to the court to claim the inheritance of his father, who was recently dead. As he approached the palace he met an esquire, who was wounded, and who informed him of the perilous situation of his uncle. Hernaïs hastened forwards with his company, forced his way into the palace, sword in hand, struck down the men of Fromont on every side, and gave Hardré, Fromont's father, a blow on the head, which scattered his brains over the pavement. Garin sprung forwards, thanked Hernaïs for his assistance, and joined

in the destruction of his enemies; while Fromont, dismayed at this sudden reverse of fortune, escaped from the palace by a window, and fled to St. Quentin, attended by only fourteen knights. Henry of Montague, Garin's cousin-german, also came to the assistance of his kinsmen, and joined in the slaughter of the Bordelais; after which they cleared the palace of the slain, and threw the body of Hardré into a ditch.

Pepin, at the suggestion of Henry of Montague, assembled an army, with the resolution to reduce and punish the rebellious barons who had taken part with Fromont. After having captured Soissons, the patrimony of Fromont, the emperor returned to Mont-Loon. Meanwhile Fromont had arrived at St. Quentin, had there consulted with his cousin Huedes, and they spent the night in writing letters to their friends whose aid they demanded to avert the danger which threatened his family. To strengthen his alliance, Fromont married Helisens, the dame of Pontis, and sister of the Flemish count Bauduin, and committed a new act of rebellion in contracting a marriage without the consent of his sovereign. As soon as the nuptial ceremonies had been completed, his allies assembled their troops at St. Quentin, and proceeded thence to plunder and lay waste the lands and possessions of the barons who were opposed to them, till at last they laid siege to the city of Cambrai, which was gallantly defended by Hues de Cambresis. No sooner did these tidings reach the emperor and Garin at Loon, than letters were dispatched to every part of the kingdom that all who were loyal and friendly to the emperor should speedily join his standard. The tidings were also carried by a messenger of Fromont to his turbulent uncle, Bernard of Naisil, with a pressing

demand that he should hasten with his men to join the partisans. Bernard rejoiced exceedingly at the intelligence—

"Said Bernard, 'My heart is joyous to-day:
We will go and hear what our neighbours say;
Full well shall the churls and their masters know,
Who have quietly fattened both ox and cow,
That Bernard's sword, at its owner's will,
Can quickly his folds and larders fill.
Speed, messenger, my nephew tell
That I counsel he look to his warring well,
Nor waste his time in idle sleep;
While I my quarters here will keep.
Say, Bernard will never desert his kin.'"

"Et dit Bernars: 'Or enforce mes pris
Et ma grant joie et mes tres grant delis.
Or sauront bien entor moi mi voisin,
Qui ont les vaches et les grans bues norris,
Coment je sais del roit espieu ferir.
Vas en arriere, messagiers, biaus amins,
Dis mon nevou, gardes ne li mentir,
Qu'il pense bien de sa guerre fournir:
Qui bien guerroie, ne l'estuet pas dormir.
Que par decà voudrai mon lieu tenir;
Ne li faudrai tant com je soie vis.'" (p. 183.)

He assembled his retainers and dependants, entered Lorraine, spreading devastation on every side, and had laid siege to Dijon, when his progress was arrested by Garin's brother, Begues of Belin.

One of Pepin's messengers had found Begues at Bordeaux, with William, Fromont's brother, little suspecting the troubles which had arisen out of the expedition against the Saracens at Valprofonde. The intelligence was communicated privately to Begues; he escaped to Gironville, where

he assembled an army, and, by the counsel of his allies, instead of joining immediately the host of the emperor, he hastened forward against Bernard of Naisil, taking by the way Lyons and other places of importance which belonged to his enemies. He soon drove Bernard to his own castle of Naisil, where he besieged him, took the castle, and imprisoned its owner in his own dungeon. In the mean time, Pepin, whose messenger had been insulted by Fromont, drove him and his friends from Cambrai, and obliged them to take shelter in St. Quentin, to which town he laid siege. Here Fromont was joined by his brother William with the Bordelais.

Begues, after having reduced and imprisoned Bernard of Naisil, proceeded to destroy Monclin, Verdun, and the other strongholds of the barons who had joined Fromont, when a message from the emperor caused him to hasten towards St. Quentin, where the latter was much embarrassed by the attacks of his enemies from the town. The king went out to meet him, and rejoiced much when he beheld his host spreading itself over the valley.

"The king approached a messenger,
And said, 'What men are these I see?'
'That is the good duke Aubery,
A better ne'er held land or fee,
Burgundia's arms, I wot, are his;
And after rides duke Hernaïs;
Next come the Mançel, and Angevine,
Avallois, and those from beyond the Rhine.
And there, behind, see Bauduin ride,
Auvergne is his; and there, beside,
The Gascons by duke Begon led,
His banners o'er the meadows spread.'
'Thank God!' said the king, 'I have my desire,
There is none under heaven can brave *his* ire.'"

"Un mes demande: 'Quel gent sunt ores çi?'
Et cis respont: 'Jà le pourez oïr;
C'est de Borgoine li bons dux Auberis,
Li miedres dux qui terre puist tenir;
Cil sunt Bourgoing qui vienent avec lui.
Après chevauche li bons dux Hernaïs,
Et après li Mancel et Angevin,
Et Avallois et cil d'outre Rin.
Vez cels derrieres, c'est li quens Bauduins
Qui a Auvergne toute quite à tenir.
Vez ces banieres parmi ces prés venir,
C'est li quens Begues dou chastel de Belin.'
'Diex!' dist li rois, 'or ai tout mon devis,
Sor ciel n'a homme qui le poïst sofrir.'" (p. 250.)

After the arrival of Begues, there were many conflicts between the besieged and the besiegers, in one of which he was himself dangerously wounded, but the men of Fromont were always defeated. Begues was cured by a skilful physician who had been educated at Salerno, and soon after he surrounded the town with intrenchments, cutting off all communication with the neighbouring country. Fromont and his party were now much dispirited, and when Bernard of Naisil, who was still in prison, made proposals for a reconciliation, they readily acquiesced, and after some previous consultation, pledges of restitution and reparation were given on both sides. The king held a court at Paris, where all the barons attended, and where also came the maiden Blancheflor, the betrothed of Garin, with a splendid convoy.

"The palfrey on which the maiden rode
Was whiter than is the fleur-de-lis;
Its bridle was worth a hundred marks,
And its trappings shone full daintily.

A fairer face, or gentler form,
Or sweeter mouth, or teeth more white,
Or body of nobler make than hers,
Ne'er met the gaze of mortal sight.
Bright eyes, from under well-arched brows,
Smiled joyously on all around;
And flaxen locks hung gracefully
From head with gorgeous chaplet crowned.
Well fill'd were the streets of Paris that day,
And joyously shouted the crowd, I ween,
'God grant that our noble emperor
Should make this gentle maiden his queen!' "

" Li palefrois sor quoi la dame sist
Estoit plus blans que n'est la flor de lis;
Li lorains vaut cent mars de parisis,
Et la sambue nuns plus riche ne vit.
La dame ert gente et de cor et de vis,
Bouche espessete, et les dens ot petis,
Il sunt plus blans qu'ivoire planéis;
Hanches bassetes, blans et vermeil li vis,
Les ieus rians et bien fais les sorcis;
C'est la plus belle qui onques mais naquit.
Sor ses espaules li gisent si blon crin:
En son chief ot un chapelet petit
D'or et de pieres qui mout bien li avint.
Toutes les rues emplissent de Paris;
Dist l'uns à l'autre: 'Com belle dame a çi!
Elle devroit un roiaume tenir.
Pléust à Dieu l'empereres Pepins
L'éust à fame, si serions tuit garis.' " (p. 297.)

The wish of the good people of Paris was much nearer being fulfilled than might have been expected. When Pepin declared his will that the marriage of Garin should be celebrated the following morning, the arch-

bishop Henry of Rheims represented to him urgently, that if this marriage took place, the party of Fromont would never be satisfied, but that it would be a cause of perpetual dissensions in the kingdom. "What shall I do, then?" said the emperor. "Marry the maiden yourself, sire," was the ready reply. "But my promise!" was the natural answer of the king, a scruple which was easily overcome by the archbishop, who informed him that he had procured two monks to swear that she was too near in relationship to Garin to become lawfully his wife. "Well," said the king, "I will go and see her; and if she suit me, she shall have me for her husband." Accordingly the king went, was charmed with her beauty and manners, fell deeply in love, and consented to the archbishop's proposal.

On the morn fixed for the nuptials, the count Fromont, with Bernard of Naisil, and thirty-six knights of his party, entered the palace. When he saw Blancheflor, Bernard would have persuaded Fromont to join him in seizing her person, with the design of marrying her to one of their own friends, Isoré or William of Monclin—he even offered to leave his own wife to take her to himself. Fromont retorted somewhat bitterly: "I come not here," said he, "to make war, but to establish peace, if God will permit,"—and provoked the anger of the haughty Bernard.

> "'Wretch!' Bernard said, 'no kin of mine
> Could harbour coward soul like thine.'"
>
> "'Voir,' dist Bernars, 'ainc ne m'apartenis!
> Mauvais couars! com estes assouplis!'" (v. ii, p. 7.)

The ill designs of the lord of Naisil were rendered vain by

the entrance of Garin, Begues, the German Ouri, Gerard of Liege, and Aubery of Bourgoigne, with full sixty chosen knights in their train.

When the archbishop Henry rose and proclaimed the bans of marriage between Garin and Blancheflor, a monk, as had been agreed upon, came forward and declared the union to be unlawful, on the ground of consanguinity. Garin was angry, but there seems to have been some truth in the plea, though it was one which, under other circumstances, might easily have been passed over: the monk persisted in his assertion, the king was well inclined to listen to it, and the marriage ceremonies ceased. Fromont seized the opportunity, went to Garin and expressed deep sorrow for the quarrel which had taken place between them, and an ardent desire that there should ever after be friendship between their families. To this end he proposed that Garin and Begues should marry his two sisters, and that Garin should endeavour to promote the union of Blancheflor with his brother William. Garin at once consented to the project, but it was suddenly overthrown by the declaration of Pepin that it was his intention to make her his queen. The nuptials accordingly took place, but the feast on the occasion gave rise to another quarrel between the family of Fromont and the Lorrains.

Garin served the wine in the hall, an office which Fromont seems to have considered as appertaining to himself; and Bernard, who was sitting at table with him and Isoré le Gris, urged his nephew to snatch the cup from Garin's hand. Fromont refused, and Bernard himself sprang forward, and in his attempt to seize the cup, spilt its contents over Garin's robe.

" 'Would Bernard drink?' duke Garin said,
With eye unmoved; 'a draught, perdy!
Of better wine I'll give to thee.'
Bernard in angry tone replied,
'Hold! caitif wretch! May ill betide
The fool who gave that cup to thee!
And shame the traitor's portion be
Who touches Fromont's heritage.' "

" Garins le voit, si l'a à raison mis :
'Voulez-vous boivre, sire Bernars?' dist-il,
'Je vous donrai encore de millor vin!'
Et dist Bernars : 'Malerrous, chaïtis!
A toi que tient de la nef d'or tenir?
Tu deshérites Fromont et ses amins;
Il t'en puet bien mal et honte avenir.' " (v. ii, p. 17.)

Bernard then made a second attempt to seize the cup, but Garin struck him with it on the forehead, tearing off by the blow the skin and the eyebrows, and covering his face with blood. The knights on both sides rose from table, a general engagement commenced in the royal hall, and the Lorrains were nearly overcome by numbers. Meanwhile Begues, who it appears had the care of the cooking, was in the kitchen. When tidings came to him of the confusion in the hall, he called the cook, and ordered him with his men, to the number of sixty, to hasten thither, armed with pestles, ladles, spits, or any weapon on which they could lay their hands. At the same time the king, at the urgent expostulation of his queen, ordered the French to arm quickly to punish the offending Bordelais. Begues himself came armed with a large spit, full of hot roasting plovers, which he broke over the neck of Isoré, and with the

stump knocked down the count Harduin. The Bordelais fled from the hall; but, as they hurried down the steps, a lad who carried rabbits slew Joscelin, the bastard son of Fromont, with a stone which he threw at his head. The king's men took sixty prisoners, and among the rest Fromont, Bauduin, Lancelin of Verdun, William, and Isoré.

In the hopes of procuring their release from prison, they agreed, at the instigation of Bernard of Naisil, to accuse Garin of treason. Isoré supported the charge, and Garin accepted the challenge by battle; but Begues, when he heard of it, pleaded his privilege of defending his brother, and caused the challenge to be transferred to himself. The battle ended in the death of Isoré, whose head Begues clove to the teeth. Bernard fled in all haste to his castle of Naisil, whence he again invaded and ravaged Lorraine, and Fromont and his companions returned to prison; but by the good will of Begues they were released, and they all swore lasting fealty to Pepin, and friendship to the family of the Lorrains. Suddenly arrived tidings of the insurrection of Bernard; but Fromont and his friends renounced all co-operation with him, and joined the king, who assembled his army, and quickly drove Bernard to his own castle. There he was besieged, and, after an obstinate defence, reduced to extremities; but, at the intercession of Frémont, he was allowed to make terms for the preservation of his castle.

After peace had been again established, Garin and Begues, at the particular desire of Pepin and his queen Blancheflor, married the two daughters of the king's uncle, the duke Miles, the "well-made" Aelis and the "fair" Beatrix, who received as their dower each an equal share of the territory of their father, who became

himself a monk of St. Surin. The dukes, with their consorts, went to their own castles—Garin[3] to Metz, where he begat a son called Girbert—Begues to Gascony, to his castle of Belin.

Thiebaud, a baron of Fromont's party, who, it appears, had sought in vain the hand and dower of Beatrix, was playing at chess at Bordeaux, when tidings arrived that she had been married to Begues, and that the latter was on his way to the castle of Belin, with his wife and a company of eighty knights. Thiebaud suddenly conceived the project of waylaying the duke, slaying him, and carrying away his wife; and with this intent he lay in ambush, with about two hundred and eighty of his men. With difficulty a party from Belin, who had received intelligence of the peril which threatened their lord, rescued the lady and her wounded husband from their hands; they were carried to the castle, where the wounds of Begues and his friends were soon healed by the care of skilful physicians of Salerno. Thiebaud, who, having himself commenced hostilities, was determined to proceed in them, by great exertions raised an army of thirty thousand men, with which he invaded the lands of Begues, and laid siege to his castle. The duke Begues was closely pressed; with difficulty he found a messenger who would venture out in search of his friends; the messenger came before the king, who was enraged at the tidings; but Bernard of Naisil, who was present, denied the truth of the messenger's story, and insulted the queen, who had spoken in favour of the Lorrains. She complained to Garin, who entered with seven-score knights in his train. He immediately went to Bernard, struck him a blow with his fist, which broke four of his teeth and laid him prostrate on the ground,

where the burgesses, who came to the place, would instantly have put him to death, but for the intercession of the king. The king and Garin again placed themselves at the head of their army, and compelled Thiebaud to take shelter in the city of Bordeaux.

The king now besieged Bordeaux. But Bernard, meanwhile, enraged at his misadventure, had repaired to Sens, where he persuaded William of Monclin, and, though not without much difficulty, Fromont, to join him in assisting the Bordelais, and with their friends and retainers they entered the besieged city. After a long siege, during which were performed many chivalrous deeds, and in which many men were slain, and the city itself taken and burnt, the besieged barons being confined to the castle, the latter were again glad to obtain any terms of reconciliation.

The peace seems now to have lasted for some time. One day Begues was with Beatrix at his castle of Belin; he was sad and pensive, and told his wife that he must pay a visit to his brother Garin, whom he had not seen for a long space of time. He had heard also that the Bois de Puelle was the haunt of a great boar, which he would take the opportunity of hunting, as the wood lay near his way. The wood, however, was in the territory of his old enemies, and Beatrix prayed him not to put himself into their power. The duke left Belin with his cousin Rigaut, taking with him thirty-six knights, with skilful hunters, to assist in the chase; and at Valenciennes his host, who knew well the haunts of the boar, offered to lead him to the wood. The boar was hunted; Begues in the ardour of the chase was separated from his men, overtook the animal and slew it, and being alone and ignorant of the

way, at the approach of night he took shelter under a tree. There he made a fire, and sounded his horn to assemble his dogs. The foresters, who had heard the horn and saw the duke with his dogs, carried the tidings in haste to Fromont's friends. Thiebaud and others hastened to the spot; they knew the knight, rejoiced at the chance which had thrown into their power their old enemy, set upon him suddenly, and he was slain with an arrow by one of the archers. The body was carried to Sens. Fromont was angry and sorrowful, for he saw how his officious friends had again drawn him into rebellion against the emperor, by a new quarrel with the party of the Lorrains. He showed all possible respect to the body of the duke; the latter was carried in great honour to Valenciennes, and he was buried in the presence of Pepin and Garin, amid the lamentations of his relations, friends, and followers. On his tomb was inscribed—

"HE WAS THE BEST WHO E'ER RODE UPON STEED."

"Ce fu li mieuldres qui sor destrier séist." (v. ii, p. 272.)

Here concludes that part of the poem of the Lorrains which has been printed by M. Paulin Paris. The remainder of the third chanson—for he has printed the first two, and part of the third—contains the account of the war which was again stirred up between the Lorrains and the Bordelais —of the flight of the elder Fromont, and of his return to France at the head of the Saracens—his death—and, finally, the death of Garin, and the proscription of his son Girbert, with Hernaut and Garin, the sons of Begues of Belin. *

* As this sheet was going to press, M. Edélestand du Méril has published another portion of the romance, under the title, *La Mort de Garin le Loherain.* Paris, 1846.

Such is the plot of one of the best of what have been termed "*chansons de geste.*" It is probable that at least some of the romances which are included under this title, are reflections of the earlier national cycles which the Franks, like all their neighbours, must have once possessed. Through what medium they reached their present form, it is not easy to imagine,—whether they were really imitations or modernizations of older poems—whether they were founded on popular traditions, to which those poems had given rise—or whether, which is by no means improbable, they are metrical versions of Latin histories, which had themselves been formed upon older ballads and songs. The romance of Garin le Loherrain is stated in the manuscripts to be the work of Jehan de Flagy: but it is too full of historical details, too little encumbered with romantic incidents, to be the *invention* of a French romancer of the age at which, in all probability, that person must have lived. It is in fact a poem full of vigour and spirit—the circumstances are told vividly and naturally, without any of that laboured attempt at description which characterizes what have been generally understood by the title of early French romances. These latter have a distinct character—they generally consist of an ill-arranged heap of incredible combats, of great means to produce little things, of perilous enterprises without any object—the same action, the same stratagem, the same circumstances, repeated till they raise a nausea. Even the romances which belong to the fabulous history of Charlemagne merit in part the same censure. The romance of Garin, on the contrary, is a magnificent and true picture of the evils which every day must have witnessed, when a numerous body of turbulent barons, always jealous of

each other, and ever more ready to command than to seek as a boon the royal favour, were ruled by a young and weak monarch.

We are inclined to believe, that these "chansons de geste," most of which appear to have been composed towards the end of the twelfth and during the thirteenth centuries, were never popular among the Normans: they were certainly not popular amongst them in England, and we are not aware that at an early period any of them received an English dress. The simple improbability of the thing to all but those who, as many of the old French critics were in the habit of doing, confound Normans with Frenchmen, would lead us to adopt the idea that the former, at the battle of Hastings, if they sung at all, chanted not a "chanson" of Roland and of Oliver, and of the disaster at Roncevaux, but of Rollo their own great leader, who had procured them a settlement in the land of the Franks, and that it was the popularity of the former story in Wace's time, which led him erroneously to amplify the brief observation of the chronicles (*tunc cantilena Rollandi inchoata,* or, as another has it, *cantu . . . inchoato*) into the celebrated passage:—"Taillefer, who sang full well, rode on a swift horse before the duke, singing of Charlemagne and of Roland and of Oliver, and of the vassals who died at Renchevals."

"Taillefer, ki mult bien cantout,
Sor un cheval ki tost aloit
Devant le duc aloit cantant
De Karlemaine e de Rollant,
Et d'Oliver e des vassals
Ki morurent en Renchevals."

A passage of the chronicle of a canon of Oseney,

printed in the collection of Gale, might seem to favour this supposition—its compiler speaks of "Guillelmus Longespe, filius *Rollandi*, primi ducis Normannorum." It is by no means unlikely, however, that the circumstance of Taillefer singing in the battle was an invention of the chroniclers, after the battle of Ronçevaux had become itself a popular subject of song—and that the ground of the story was his fame as a minstrel. The purpose of the anecdote is to show the bold recklessness of the warrior, who could amuse himself with his song-craft in the very face of the enemy.

Many wild theories have been started by those who have sought the *origin* of romance, and who would fain discover among one particular people only, that which must have been common to all. The French writers on this subject have generally commenced with a previously imbibed prejudice, that their own country alone must have the glory of the invention, and that unless they establish this position they will have laboured in vain. The author of the preface to the last edition of Legrand d'Aussy's *Fabliaux ou Contes*, asserts, that we owe the origin of romance to the expeditions of Charlemagne against the Saracens: and, after assuring us that all nations borrowed their romances from those of the French, proceeds to observe—

"The invention of romance was received throughout England with the same ardour as amongst our other neighbours. But this people, jealous and from that period envious of France, was unwilling to give to its paladins a French chieftain such as had been Charlemagne: they formed the design of selecting another from amongst their own kings, and of transforming him into a famous

hero, who by his exploits should eclipse our own. The personage destined for this high character was Arthur, a prince unknown and the less fitted for it, because in history he has no place. But what will, I think, appear still more awkward is, that amongst his conquests this hero of heroes places a portion of France, and that he assumes for his vassals several of the small kings who are supposed to have reigned there. If, however, we recollect, that at the time when these lying fictions were written, England, itself conquered, was subject to a dynasty of French princes it will be agreed that, to the eyes of attentive readers, it is with nations in their writings as with individuals: their character always peeps out in some place or other"!!

This ingenious theory, while it exhibits the ability of its author in laying foundations upon nothing, shows also his entire ignorance both of the history of his subject, and of that of the people of whom he talks. Where, we wonder, did he learn that Arthur, as a hero of romance, was more modern than Charlemagne?—and above all, we would willingly know by what series of investigations he came to the conclusion, that the romances of the Round Table originated in England. He ought to have known, that there never existed any originals of these romances in the English language—that the hero was not one of our kings, and was not likely to be claimed as one: he ought further to have known that in England they were first popular not among the *conquered* people, but among those who had succeeded in intruding themselves into our island; and above all, he ought to have been aware, that that people was much nearer allied to Saxon than to Frankish blood; that, instead of being Frenchmen, they were among the

greatest and most powerful enemies of the French nation; and that both the conquered and the conquerors were of all others the least likely to have thus created the romantic character of Arthur.

We possess remains of our own national romance, more purely mythic and of much greater antiquity, than any nation which flourished during the middle ages. There are still many traces of the older mythic romances of the Germans, and of the Northern nations—and it is not improbable, from the mention of some of their personages in the French romances (as of Weland, for instance), that the northern cycles were known at an early period in France. Perhaps there existed also an old mythic cycle among the people of Bretagne, of whom so much has been said, and so often—some hero named Arthur may have figured in it. The name and history of the Saxon hero Beowulf were alike forgotten among the English of a later period; the name of Arthur, on the contrary, whose history perhaps was misunderstood, and his character misapplied, may have been regenerated in forming that cycle of middle age romance, the origin of which seems so difficult even to conjecture.

There appears to have been another class of Anglo-Saxon romances, more peculiarly native in England, because much more modern than that class of which Beowulf is now the representative, whose subjects belonged to the wars between the Saxons and the Danes. The original Saxon poems are now entirely lost. A class of romances which told of the struggles against the Danish invaders—whose ravages were so long remembered, and at the period of the breaking up of the Saxon language so recent—could hardly have failed

to give rise to traditions among the people. We know that these traditions were long preserved, and that they often fixed the scene of the story to particular places. Similar traditions, if we trust the details of Pausanias, had originated in the East from the early popularity of the Grecian mythic cycles. Many of the Saxon romances, of which we are speaking, appeared in Middle-English, where they were either transformations of the original Saxon poems, or else poems built upon the traditions to which they had given rise. The popularity of these romances caused them to be translated into Norman-French, at a period as early, if not earlier, than that of the translations from French into English. Their existence has entirely exploded the old notion that England never possessed any native romances. Even had the originals of these romances been in Norman, they would still have been, strictly speaking, English romances—the stories were English, and the Norman versions were in all probability written in England—and we should be surprised to find a copy of Horn or of Havelok in an early French manuscript along with a "chanson de geste."

In addition to the internal evidence of the fact which these romances afford us, we have in one instance a direct assertion that the French poem was a translation from the English. One of the romances, which is connected with the story of the struggles of the Saxons with the Danes, is preserved in French metre, under the title of the Romance of Waldef, in a manuscript now in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps. Among the manuscripts of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, we find a Latin prose version of this romance, under the name of King Waldeus, made by John Bromis, or Bramis, a monk of Thetford, in the

beginning of the fifteenth century, according to the saying—

"De Thetford Monachus Bramis edidit ista Johannes."

This manuscript belonged to the monastery of Thetford, and is probably the original copy of Bramis's translation, which was there in the days of Leland. The translator, in his preface, states that it was originally written in English verse; and that, at the desire of a lady who could not read the English, it was translated into French verse, from which he had translated it into Latin, having also consulted, as it would seem, a mutilated copy of the original English.* This latter, he tells us, was divided into cantos, a mode of division which was omitted in the French version. The names in this romance are mostly Saxon and Danish—the plot is laid chiefly in East Anglia —Colchester is held by the Saracens, (Danes,) and is

* "*Incipit prologus super hystoriam Waldei quondam Norffolchie Suffolchieque regis eximii de Gallicis et Anglicis verbis in Latinum translatus.*

"Primitus subsequens regis Waldei filiorumque hystoria suorum in lingua Anglica metrice composita est. Deinde ad instantiam cujusdam femine, que ipsam penitus linguam nesciret, quam non alio quam amice nomine voluit indagare, a quodam in linguam Gallicam est translata. At vero novissime eandem historiam non solum seniorum preceptis et ut verecundans dico rogatibus, scilicet ipsis ecclesie a quoque intuitu difficilia queque et ardua celeri lenitate mustescunt muneribus, compulsus sum hac de causa in Latinum transferre sermonem. Ejusdem historie pars quedam usque ad quartam hujus operis partem continuata in ipsa lingua qua primo fuerat conscripta reperta est. Que in tantum legentium sensus in suum protraxit afficium, (*officium*) ut reliquam ejusdem historie portionem, que nusquam in ipsa Anglica lingua quamvis in Gallica repperiri poterat, gravi penitentia deflerent." (*MS. Bibl. C. C. C. Cambr.* No. 329.)

besieged by Waldeus—and more than one battle takes place in the neighbourhood of Thetford: one, for instance, between that place and Rowdham, and another towards Elveden. John Bramis assures us that the French translator took many liberties with his story: the narrative, as he has given it to us, for we have not had an opportunity of examining the French romance, would naturally lead us to this conclusion; and, as an instance, we may quote that error into which all the French translators fell. The later Saxons, after the crusade, used the word *Saracen* in the sense of *pagan*, and commonly applied it to the pagans of the north. The French poets, whose thoughts ran more upon the *Saracens* of Spain and Africa, misunderstood the application of the word; and Waldeus, who in the original fought so valiantly against the *Saracens* in East Anglia, is by the French translators sent into Valencia to fight the Saracen king of Spain.*

The romance of Havelok is, in the French, called a "lai," and the writer confesses that it is a translation, though he calls his original a lay of the Bretons:—

> "Haveloc fut cil roi nomé,
> Et Cuaran est appellé,
> Pur ceo vus voil de lui conter
> Et s'aventure remembrer;
> Q'un lai en firent li Breton,
> Si l'appellerent de son nom,
> Et Haveloc et Cuarant." (*Lai d'Hav. l.* 17.)

* Even the monks, in their chronicles, fell sometimes into the same error—the name of the African king, mentioned in the following paragraph, is essentially northern.—Anno DXC.iiij^to^. Germundus rex Affricorum et Ysembertus nepos regis Francorum Britanniam vastaverunt, Cristianitatem adnichilaverunt." (*Chronicon Winton., MS. Cotton* Domit., A. xiii.)

"Haveloc was that king named, and he was also called Cuarant. For this reason I will tell you of him, and recall to memory his story; because the Bretons made a lay of him, which they called after his name, both Haveloc and Cuarant." And, at the end, he tells us that it was the strong traditional remembrance of his deeds among the people, which caused the lay of his history to be made:—

"Haveloc held in his dominion Lincoln and all Lindesey; twenty years he reigned, and was king of it; he conquered enough by means of his Danes. There was full great talk of him: the ancients in memory of him made a lay of his victory."

"Haveloc tint en sa baillie
Nicole et tote Lindesie,
.Xx. anz regna, si en fut rois;
Assez conquist par ses Danois.
Mult fu de li grant parlance:
Li auncien par remembrance
Firent un lai de sa victoire." (*l.* 1097.)

That, however, the history of Havelok could ever have been a Breton story, or that the names which occur in it could have had a place there, is much more than improbable. If the term "Breton lay" were not from the first a name without substance, it seems clear that, at the time of the writer of the French Havelok, the signification of the term was by no means distinctly understood: he, misled perhaps by the equivocal meaning of the word "Bretagne," seems to have considered his English original as one of them; for that an original English Havelok existed we think no one who has attentively read the French poem can doubt. The writer of the latter seems to have been equally well acquainted with the English

poem, and with the numerous popular traditions concerning its hero, which certainly at that time existed in England.

Of the three stories of English growth, which are spoken of collectively in the passage quoted by Warton, from a manuscript at Oxford, (three of what M. Paris would term our "chansons de geste,")—

> "Of [H]evcloke, Horne, and of Wade,
> In romances that of them be made,"

two still exist both in English and in French verse. The romance of Horn seems to have been popular in every form, and we have, in French and in English, no fewer than seven manuscripts of it. The manuscript of the French version of Horn, which is preserved at Cambridge, (MS. Bib. Pub. Ff. 6, 17,) is by much the best, but it is unfortunately defective at the beginning and end by the loss of two or three leaves. It is of the thirteenth century. The other two, one in the Harleian MS. No. 627, the second in a manuscript which belonged to the late Mr. Douce, and which is now at Oxford, are but fragments, and supply very little of what is wanting in the Cambridge copy, though they afford some valuable readings, and one of them acquaints us with the name of the Norman poet who wrote it, who is there called Thomas.* In the in-

* We have printed our extracts from this romance as they stand in the manuscript of Cambridge. As we cannot suppose all our readers to be conversant in this antiquated language, wherever we have thought it absolutely necessary, in order to preserve the thread of the story we have given in the text a loose rhyming version, in which we have endeavoured as much as possible to imitate the style and manner of the original.

83199

troduction to the French romance of Waldef, we are informed that the romance of Horn was taken from an English original.

The Cambridge MS. of the French Horn, as it now begins, introduces to us Horn and his companions wandering on the waves. God, it says, gave them a north-west wind—

"He gave them there a wind, from the northwest blowing,
Which drove them to Bretagne where Hunlaf then was king;
A powerful king, I ween, right brave and rich was he;
A pious man he was, and loved well loyalty."

"Ki un vent lor dona, del norwest ventant,
Ki en Bretaigne les mist, ù Hunlaf fu manant;
Un rei mut poestif, riches hom e vaillant,
De grant religiun, leauté mut amant."

They land in Bretagne, and are found by Herlant, the seneschal of king Hunlaf, who inquires their business there; and after having learnt from Horn their history, takes them with him to the court, and presents them to the king. Hunlaf again questions Horn as to his parentage, and the latter tells him—

"Mis peres fud uns bers, vaillant hom durement;
Aaluf ad à num, si ma geste ne ment.
En Suddene fu nez, si la teint longement;
Reis Silauf le trova, si l' norrit bonement.
Apres fu koneu par Deu comandement,
Qu'il iert de geste real descendu veirement;
Newu fu Baderouf de sa fille al cors gent,
Goldeburc out à num à sun baptismement.
Ne sai si unc oistes de reis tel parlement;
Pruz e hardi furent, de bon contenement.
Des anmes ait merci li reis omnipotent!

Quant çoe fud koneu ke Aalof fud bien né,
Qu'il fu nefs Baderof le bon e l'alosé,
Ki iert sur Alemauns enperere clamé,
Dunc li ad reis Silaus par grant amur doné
Une fille qu'il out, le vis out coluré;
E ovoc li dona après sei sun regné.
D'icest dunt joe vus di sui joe joius e led." (fol. 4. r°.)

He then tells him how the Saracens, under their king Rodmond, had invaded Suddene, put to death his father and all his relations, and how Rodmond, finding him and his companions concealed in the garden, and unwilling to stain his own hands with the blood of children so fair, had exposed them on the sea.

"And thus Rodmund saved us, the king of Africans."
"Ainz nuns livera Rodmund, cel rei Affricanz." (fol. 5, r°.)

The king, satisfied of the good parentage of Horn, caused him to be treated as his own son, and as he grew up he was respected and renowned for his skill, his humility, his valour, and his generosity. King Hunlaf had an only daughter, the beautiful Rigmel. Her hand had been sought by many princes and noble barons: but she had heard of Horn, of his prowess and his beauty, and her heart selected him as the only one worthy of her love.

One Pentecost, the king held a full court, an annual festival, attended by many barons and ladies of different lands. It was the custom for all the barons to take this opportunity of presenting, for the first time, their sons who were just arrived at manhood. Horn was presented, and was appointed to bear the cup in the hall. The princess Rigmel had hitherto been sage and discreet, and had concealed her passion, but she now determined to seek an

interview with Horn, and for that purpose dispatched her confidential maid, Herselot, to summon her father's seneschal to her presence. The maiden found Herland in the hall, standing beside a rich and powerful baron of the neighbourhood, called Godfrei—she delivered her message, and the seneschal soon after attended upon Rigmel, who gave him wine and clarey, for which purpose Rabel, the butler, had brought the royal cup; and she presented him with several gifts, among which was a ring—

"And first there the maiden to Herland gave a ring,
Large and rich, which was forged in the time of Daniel;
For well I wot 'twas made by the goldsmith Marcel."

"Al premier ad doné à Herland un anel,
Gros d'or quit Melekin (?) des le tems Daniel
Fud forgié, s'il forga li orfievre Marcel."

and a horse, which she sent her esquire Bertin to order of Blanchard. Herland, overcome by her persuasions and her promises, engaged to bring Horn into her presence the following day, but, after leaving her, he began to feel some presentiments that the result might be ill, and he determined to take, in place of Horn, Haderof, one of his companions, who bore some resemblance to him. Rigmel spent the night anxiously and restlessly, and told Herselot how she desired Horn for her husband.

"Dame, dist Herselot, vus l'averez, jo l' devin.
Un avisiun vi, par qei sai k'ert issin,
Qu'il vus fist un gent dun d'un faukun muntarsin;
El sein le metiez de desuz l'osterin,
Si ne l' donissez pas pur le regne Pepin.
Bien sai ke c'iert un fiz ke averez del meschin,
E la lei fausera Tervagan e Apollin;
Et par lui, si il vit, murra meint barbarin." (fol. 14. r°.)

Rigmel was a little comforted by Herselot's dream. In the morning her impatience returned; she sent Herselot to the seneschal, who was at dinner, to remind him of his promise. After dinner he brought to her Haderof, who, when she began to speak of Horn, joined in his praise, asserting that there

"Was none better than he between Norway and Frise."

"Ke n'ad meillur de lui entre Norweie e Frise."

Rigmel discovered quickly the deceit which had been practised upon her, called directly her nurse and minstrel, "Godswiþ," who knew Horn, and was so furious, that the seneschal, to appease her, promised to bring Horn himself the next day. The impatience of the princess, as the time of meeting approached, is well described—twice she sent Herselot to hasten the seneschal. At length Horn came; his beauty was such that she thought him an angel, and she at once declared to him her love, giving to him for a token of it a ring, and telling him to be discreet, as she feared to be beaten if their intercourse should be known. Horn was modest, represented himself as a poor orphan, and unworthy of her, but before taking his leave he promised to be her lover after he had proved by his deeds that he was worthy of her favour.

In the mean time came the Saracens into the land of Hunlaf—

"D'Aufrike sunt eissu dui rei de grant puissance,
Ki onc Deu ne amerent, çoe fud doel e viltaunce.
Freres erent Rodmund, un rei de surquidance,
Ki ocist Aalof le rei de grant vaillaunce,
Le pere à içest Horn, qu'avom çi en balaunce.
* * * *

E vus porrez oir, si ne faites noisaunce,
Ke cist vindrent od ost d'orguil e de bobaunce
En la terre Hunlaf ki iert en seguraunce.
A un port ariverent k'om apele Constaunce.
Reis Gudolf e Egolf furent içist nomez,
Ki en la terre Hunlaf sunt ore arivez,
E od aus sunt venu d'Aufrike granz barnez,
Feluns e surquidez, de bataille aduré." (fol. 26, r°.)

The Saracens ravaged the land miserably, and sent a messenger to Hunlaf, commanding that he should do their will and worship "Mahun," on penalty of losing his head and all his riches. The king held a "parlement" to consider the message, and Horn offered to go against the infidels, as soon as he should be knighted. "Dan Moroan," one of the king's men, brought the "adubs," and Horn was scarcely armed after the ceremony, when one of the Saracens, Marmorin, a great and hideous giant, born in Canaan, who had been in Suddene with Rodmund, and had been accessary to the death of Aalof, brought a challenge to the court. Horn accepted the challenge himself, and, after a terrible combat, told entirely in the style of French romances, avenged his father by cutting off the giant's head. The Christians were comforted by the success of their hero—the army was put in order, the guards were all on the walls, and Horn, with a penon "*d'un cendal de Russie*," which Rigmel had sent him, issued forth, mounted on a horse of Hungary. Horn ordered his men to advance silently, that they might surprise "*icele gent faée*"—they passed a vale "*d'une selve ramée*," and came to the port where the fleet was anchored, and where their enemies had landed, and were lying securely in the meadows. A terrible combat followed—many a head did Horn separate

from its body—he slew "Eghulf," and the infidels were defeated,—but "Godelof" escaped to his ship, and fled with what remained of the pagan army. The poem gives us the names of some of the infidels who were slain. Among those killed by Horn was Turlin of Tabarine, a relation of king Godelof—Haderof slew Gibelin, constable and cousin-germán to the king—another of the infidels who fell in the battle was named Malbruart. At length the pagans throughout the whole land were reduced to subjection.

Horn had now shown himself worthy of Rigmel, and they exchanged vows of fidelity; but Wikele, one of Horn's companions, was a traitor: he had asked a gift of Horn, which the latter had already given to Haderof—he refused that which Horn proffered him instead—and in revenge he betrayed to the king the intercourse between Horn and his daughter. The king was at first incredulous, but he was convinced by being made a secret spectator of the happiness of the two lovers—was enraged beyond measure—reproached Horn with his conduct while he was out hunting—and banished him from his kingdom. The whole court lamented the loss of Horn. The interview between the latter and Rigmel was very distressing: before parting they exchanged rings, that of the princess possessing many virtues.

"Who bore this ring upon him might all his foes defy;
For not in fire or water 'twould be his fate to die,
Nor yet in battle stern, or lordly tournament."

"Hom ki l'ad sur sei jà ne purra perir;
Ne en feu ne en ewe mar i creindra murir,
N'en bataille champel, ne en turnei tenir." (fol. 42, r°.)

Horn, after leaving the princess, went towards the sea, attended by his companions who had accompanied him from Suddene. On the shore he bade adieu to them all; and, having adopted the name of Gudmod to conceal his true name and station, he set sail for Westir.

"To Westir he would go, a kingdom of great fame;
In ancient times, I wot. 'twas Ireland bore that name.
There dwelt king Godreche, a full rich king was he;
Two courtly sons he had of great nobilitie."

"En Westir veut aler, ki est regne perisez;
Yrlaunde out si à nun al tens d'auntiquitez.
La maint un riche rei, Godreche iert nomez,
Dous fiz out francs e pruz, de grant nobilitez." (fol. 43, r°.)

They arrive safely in Ireland, when the poet again observes—

"Lordings, now is Ireland what then was call'd Westir."

"Seignurs, or est Yrlande lors fu Westir nomée." (fol. 44, r°.)

Horn mounted his steed, and met the two sons of Godreche, Egfer and Guffer, who were hawking. In answer to their inquiries, he said that he was a native of Suddene, the son of a poor vavasour—that he had come thither to seek service—and that his name was Gudmod. Egfer retained him in his service, and promised him rich gifts. The king soon observed Horn in the train of his son, and, when brought into his presence, Horn repeated the same story, adding, that he had escaped from the pagans who had ravaged his country, and that he had been in Bretagne. "Gudreche" would not believe that a poor man had ever begotten such a son; he had been in Suddene—knew

Aalof and his son—and declared that he had never seen any one so like Horn as was Gudmod. Gudmod replied that a poor man often resembled a rich one, and so the conversation ended. The queen, Gudborc, now entered the hall, with her two beautiful daughters, Lenburc and Sudburc. The wine was served in the hall by a valet, whose name was Guidhere. "Lenburc" herself sent the cup to Horn; at this first interview she fell deeply in love with him, and at night she sent her valet to call him to her chamber; but Horn would not listen to her proposals. Meanwhile he showed himself, in all manly exercises, superior to the rest of the court. At Pentecost there was a great feast and games. A person named Eglaf (in other passages called Eggulf and Eggeals) excelled the rest, and was very proud and presumptuous, to the great annoyance of Horn's master, the prince Egfer. Gudmod accepted Eglaf's challenge, and beat him at throwing. After this, the harp being produced, Gudmod offers to play a lay, and sings the loves of Horn and Rigmel in Bretagne. "Guffer" said that he had heard of Horn's renown. Lenburc, who became more and more enamoured of Gudmod, then took the harp, and sung a lay of a Breton called Baltof.

One day came the Africans to Westir—

"One day two cruel tyrants came sailing o'er the sea,
And they have enter'd Westir with their fleet all vauntingly.
These kings came, as they tell us; from the land of Africa;
And brothers were of Rodmund, who Suddene held in sway.
Horn's father, king Aalof, these recreants had slain;
And 'twas their pagan brethren whom Horn slew in Bretagne.

* * * *

The elder of these kings his name was Hildebrant,
And the younger, I wot well, was called Herebrant.
A nephew they had with them, Rollac Fitz-Goldebrant."

" A un jor sunt venu dui mut felun tirant,
El regne de Westir, od lur flote siglant.
Il erent fors eissuz del regne Affricant;
Freres erent Rodmund, ki Suddene iert tenant.
Aaluf pere Horn destrustrent le vaillant:
E freres sunt à ces, dunt ot este véngant;
En Bretaigne quant fu od Hunlaf le puissant.
* * * *
Li ainz nez d'ices dous si ot nun Hildebrant,
E li autre pusonez nomez iert Herebrant.
Un nevou ont od eus, Rollac fiz Goldebrant." (fol. 52, r°.)

They arrive at the port—

" When at the port arrived the recreant Saracens,
To the king they sent don Rollac with insolent demand.
This Rollac was the son of rich sultan Gudbrand;
Nor better knight there liv'd, I ween, in Saracen domain,
Nephew he was of Rodlac who Aalof had slain."

" Al port sunt arrivé li culvert Sarazin,
Al rei ont enveié dan Rollac un meschin,
Fiz le riche soudan dan Gudbraud le meschin.
N'out si bon chevaler en la lei Apolliu;
Nieff esteit Rodlac ki Aalof mist à fin." (fol. 60, r°.)

Gudbrant, we are afterwards informed, was sultan of Persia. Rollac arrived at the court with the demands of the Saracens, and was proud and insolent.

" Nor was there better vassal in the land of Africa."

" Ni out meillor vassal el regne Affricant." (fol. 61, r°.)

When he had delivered his message, Gudmod replied fiercely, and challenged him to battle; in the encounter

Gudmod was almost overcome, when, casting his eye on Rigmel's ring, and learning, at the same time, that Rollac was the person who had killed his father, he recovered new strength, and slew the infidel. Then followed a terrible battle, which is described at great length, and in which the pagans were entirely discomfited. Among the slain was Egfer, the master of Gudmod. Gudreche sent for a king of Orkenie, and would have given to Gudmod his daughter Lenburc and his kingdom. Gudmod declined the offer, alleging that he was not worthy of so great honour, that he had formed an alliance with the daughter of a vavasour in Bretagne, and that he should be guilty of disloyalty in accepting the hand of another. While in the hall one day, a palmer arrived—

"En la sale est entré li paumer pelerin:
Escreppe ot e burdun e un chapeau feutrin.
Par mi çoe qe povere ièrt, bien semblot de bon lin,
Là ù vit seeir Horn, là tint dreit sun chemin.
Bien conut sa façun, e le vis qu'ot rosin;
E tresqu'il vint à lî à ses piez chiet enclin." (fol. 76, r°.)

The palmer addressed Horn by his own name—said that he was himself the son of Herland—and informed him that Wikele had put to death his father for his partiality to Horn—and that he had sought the latter in different lands during three years. He now begged that he would speed to Bretagne, to assist the party of Herland, and to rescue the fair Rigmel, who was about to marry the king of Fenenie. Horn distrusted the pilgrim, telling him that palmers were always liars, and alleging that it was improbable that Rigmel would marry another while Horn lived. "No," said the pilgrim, "if she had her own will,

but her father and Wikele force her to the match." Horn prepared to leave Ireland; the king was grieved, and again offered him his daughter and his kingdom, and his aid in rescuing Suddene from the pagans who had usurped it; but the attachment of the young prince to Rigmel was above all other feelings and motives; he set sail with a party of men, well armed; they soon arrived at a port in Bretagne, which was surrounded by wood, and there they concealed themselves, while Horn rode on in search of intelligence, armed only with his sword. He met a palmer, who told him that the court was at Lyons, where the marriage of Modin, the king of Fenenie, with the princess Rigmel, was on the eve of being celebrated. Horn exchanged garments with the palmer—advanced towards the city, and rested under a pine tree, whence he saw king Modin, who was newly arrived, enter Lyons in company with Wikele. It seemed these two were now intimate friends. When they swore, which it appears they did not unfrequently, their form of adjuration was "Wite God." They admired the good make of the pretended pilgrim, and invited him to the feast. Rigmel served the wine in hall—

"Costume iert aidonc en icele contrée,
Ke quant aveneit si ke dame iert espusée,
Si ele pucele fust k'el ne fust essaiée,
Ke del beivere servist tut itaunt de fiée,
Com li seneschal mangast od cel autre mesnée.
E quant oust çoe fait, après sa reposée,
Armes deveit porter cil à qui fust donée,
Par defors la cité, u en champ u en prée." (fol. 85, r°.)

Rigmel accordingly, after having dressed herself for the

occasion, filled the horn, and served round the wine. When she offered it to the palmer, he refused to drink. She, piqued by this want of courtesy, demanded why he would not take the horn—

> "Nepurquant, si li dit, or me dites bea chevalier,
> Quant beivere ne volez, ke deit le demaunder.
> Dous feiz l'ai aporté, n'en vousistes guster,
> Al semblant que joe vei le corage avez fier."

Horn then threw in the ring, and made himself known to her. During the conversation which follows between them, Horn perceived that he was noticed by Wikele, left the court, and joined his companions. Rigmel rode out, attended by Haderof, to carry the arms of her husband, according to the custom. Horn, who with his troop had been concealed by the trees, suddenly made his appearance and struck Modin from his horse. Modin's men came to rescue him, but in vain, for Horn blew his horn, and his companions hastened to his aid. Modin and Horn were then suddenly reconciled, they entered the city together; Horn and Rigmel were married; Wikele was punished, as it was right he should be; and there was a great feast, in the middle of which the MS. ends abruptly.

A very slight comparison of the French Horn with the early English romance of the same hero will convince us that the latter is not a translation. The parts of the French story which are not found in or differ from the English are exactly such as would be added by a French translator from the English, but such as are quite as likely as the rest to be retained by an English translator from the French. The names which are not in the English are generally such names as the French romancers were in

the habit of introducing in their tales of the wars with the Saracens; such, for example, as Herselot, Godfrei, Bertin, Blanchard, Moroan, Marmorin, Turlin, Gibelin, and Malbruart: in the English romance, on the contrary, the names are all good Saxon and Danish. The latter contains nothing about Africans, or sultans of Persia, or single combats with pagan giants, or assemblies at Pentecost, when all the French romance heroes held their courts. In one instance the French poet has retained the þ which was used in spelling the Saxon name; and when he would refer to authority for his story, he generally, quotes "*the parchment.*" For example, speaking of Rodlac, fol. 60. r°.—

"Cist ocist Aaloff, com dit le parchemin."

And again, when Horn had changed habits with the palmer, fol. 82. r°.—

"E Horn çi ad turné, com dit le parchemin."

The three exemplars of the English romance of Horn which are preserved, are all perfect. The one (MS. Bibl. Publ. Camb. Gg. 4, 27) is of the thirteenth century, and the other, (MS. Harl. No. 2253,) like many of the articles in the manuscript where it is found, is in all probability the copy of one of the same period. The third is at Oxford.

In the Cambridge copy, the father of Horn was Murry, his mother Godhild. In the Harleian MS. they are named Allof and Godylt. Horn himself was a very promising youth—"nas non his i-liche."—

"Twelf feren he hadde,
That alle with him ladde;

Alle riche mannes sones,
And alle hi were faire gomes,
With him for to pleie:
And mest he luvede tweie;
That on him het Hathulf child,
And that other Fykenild.
Athulf was the beste,
And Fikenylde the werste."*

One summer's day the king was riding along the sea-shore, where he saw fifteen ships of Saracens, (*i. e.* Danish pirates,) who landed, conquered the kingdom, put to death the king Murry, seized upon Horn and his companions, and slew all who would not forswear their faith and become Pagans. The queen Godhild escaped, and concealing herself in a cave in a rock, she there continued to exercise the Christian faith. The Saracen "admiral," pitying Horn yet fearing to let him grow to manhood, exposed him with his companions in a boat on the sea. (Here begins the Cambridge manuscript of the French poem.)

When they landed in Westernesse, (not, as the French has it, in Bretagne,) they met with king Almair, or, as he is afterwards called, Aylmor, who demanded of Horn whence they came, and on what errand. After hearing his story, how he was Horn of Suddene, and had been expelled his country by the infidels, the king took him to his palace, and gave him to the care of his steward, Athelbrus.

* *Gloss. nas,* (i. e.) *ne was,*) was not—*i-liche,* equal—*feren,* companions—*gomes,* lads (Sax. *guma*)—*pleie,* play—*mest,* most—*luvede tweie,* loved two—*het,* called.

"Forth he clupede Athelbrus,
That was stiward of his hus:
'Stiward, tak nu here
Mi fundlyng for to lere
Of thine mestere,
Of wude and of rivere;
And tech him to harpe
With his nayles scharpe,
Bivore me to kerve,
And of the cupe serve.
Thu tech him of alle the liste
That thu evre of wiste;
In his feiren thou wise
Into othere servise;
Horn thu undervonge,
And tech him of harpe and songe.'"*

Horn soon excelled in all manly accomplishments, and gained the love of Rimenhild, the king's only child. The story of their love is much the same as in the French, except that it has little of the details of the latter, and no maid "Herselot" is introduced.

The story of the battle between Horn and the Saracens also differs much in the two versions. In the English, when Horn, after having been knighted by the influence of Rimenhild, leaves her to seek an opportunity of proving his valour, he takes his horse and rides towards the shore, and there finds a ship of Saracens, who come to ravage the land. At his last visit Rimenhild had given him a ring,

* *Gloss. clupede*, called—*hus*, house—*nu*, now—*lere*, teach—*mestere*, craft—*bivore*, before—*kerve*, carve—*evre*, ever—*wiste*, know—*undervonge*, undertake.

by looking on which, and at the same time thinking of her, he would always come off victorious. He looks on his ring, attacks the troop of Saracens who were landed, kills many, drives away the rest, and brings the head of their chieftain to the king. There is no giant "Marmorin," as we might suppose from his name. The treachery of Fykenild is foreboded to Rimenhild in a dream, The king, at the instigation of the traitor, returns from his hunting, finds Horn in Rimenhild's bosom—

"He fond Horn in arme
On Rymenhilde barme,"*

and drives him away. Horn takes leave of his "lemman"—

"Rymenhild, have wel godne day:
No leng abiden I ne may;
Into uncuthe londe
Wel more for to fonde.
I schal wune there
Fulle seve ȝere:
At seve ȝeres ende,
ȝef I ne come ne sende,
Tak the husebonde:
For me thu ne wonde."†

and sails to "Westene londe," where he meets the king's two sons, Harild (or as it is spelt in another place, perhaps more correctly, Alrid) and Berild. The MS. Harl. calls the first Athyld. Horn calls himself Cutberd, (in the Harl. MS. Godmod,) and says he came from the West:—

* *Gloss. Rymenhilde*, Rymenhild's—*barme*, bosom.

† *Gloss. godne*, good (accusative)—*leng*, longer—*uncuthe*, strange—*wune*, dwell—*seve ȝere*, seven years—*ȝef*, if—*the*, thee—*wonde*, stay.

" Cutberd, he sede, ihc hote,
I-comen ut of the bote
Wel fer fram bi weste,
To seche mine beste."*

Berild took him to his father's hall, where he was courteously received by the king, whose name was Thurston. The story of the love of the king's daughter for Horn is only in the French, and is, perhaps, but a repetition of that of Rimenhild. Horn slays the giant who had killed his father in the battle with the Saracens, in which both the princes fell. Then it is that Thurston offers Horn his only daughter, called in the Cambridge copy, Reynild; in the Harleian, Ermenild.

It is curious that the Harleian MS. also, in one instance, at v. 873, calls the father of Horn by the name of Murry, a circumstance which has led Warton into the error of supposing Murry to be the Saracen king who had invaded Suddene. It would seem, therefore, that the writer of that manuscript had the French story, or some older English one in his mind, that he had designedly changed the name of the king to Allof, but that he misunderstood this passage, and supposed Murry here to be some other person.

The king who was to have married Rimenhild was—

" King Modi of Reynes,
On of Hornes enemies."

She sent a messenger to seek Horn in strange lands, who

* *Gloss. ihc.* I—*hote*, am named—*i-comen*, come—*ut*, out—*bote*, boat—*fer*, far—*seche*, seek.

at length arrived in Thurston's kingdom, and there met Horn, who was riding, and told him his errand. Horn went to the king, and demanded assistance to rescue Rimenhild, which was immediately granted to him.

"He dude writes sende
Into Yrlonde,
After knizhtes lizhte,
Irisse men to fizhte.
To Horn come i-nozhe,
That to schupe drozhe.
Horn dude him in the weie
On a god galeie."*

The story of Horn's arrival in Westernesse, and of his nuptials with Rimenhild, also differs very much from the same story as told by the French poet. After the marriage, and before its consummation, Horn with his Irishmen hastened to Suddene to rescue it from the hands of the infidels, leaving Rimenhild under the care of her father. The expedition to Suddene was successful, and Horn was rejoiced to find his mother still alive in her cave in the rock. In the mean while, Fykenild had again proved treacherous, had built a strong castle, in which he confined Rimenhild, with the intention of forcing her to another marriage. Horn hastened to Westernesse: with a few of his companions in the disguise of harpers, he succeeded in entering the castle of Fykenild, slew Fykenild himself while at table, and rescued his bride.

Singularly enough, there is preserved a second English romance of Horn, certainly much more modern in its

* *Gloss. dude*, did, caused—*lizhte*, light—*fizhte*, fight—*schupe*, ship—*drozhe*, drew.

present form than the other, yet which would seem to have been formed on a still older model; and which, though it has no appearance of having been translated from the French poem, has several curious coincidences with it. All these circumstances, perhaps, only tend to show that there was a poem on the adventures of Horn much older than those which now exist.* Though the "Horn Childe and Maiden Rimnild" of the Auchinleck MS., like all the other articles of that volume, bears no marks of northern dialect, yet that version of the story seems evidently to have been one formed on the traditional ideas of a person who lived in the north of England. The name of one of the kings of the invading army, Malkan, and the whole story as here told, seem to show that the traditions fixed its date to the period when the Irish Danes, in conjunction with the Scots, were wont to invade the northern parts of our land.

The name of Horn's father is, in this poem, Hatheolf, and he ruled over all England north of the Humber. Horn's companions were "eight knave childer," whom the king intrusted to the care of his steward Arlaund, who was "to lern hem to ride." Meanwhile the Danes invaded the northern counties of England, and had collected their plunder ready to be borne to their ships in Cleveland:

> "Alle her pray to schip thai bere,
> In Clifland bi Tese side."

When these tidings were brought to king Hatheolf, he

* We have an additional and decisive argument for the existence of this romance in a much earlier form, in the striking resemblance between it and the earlier part of the history of the Saxon Hereward, which can only be accounted for on the supposition that popular enthusiasm had applied the circumstances of a romance to the history of an individual.

assembled his army on "Alerton more," and hastened to attack the invaders while they were still in Cleveland:—

"In a morning thai bigan,
Of al that day thai no blan,
That baleful werk to wirke:
Sides thai made blo and wan,
That er were white so fether on swan,
Whiche gamen man aught irke.
When that even bicam,
The Danismen were al slan,
It bigan to mirke.
Whoso goth or rideth ther-bi,
Yete may men se ther bones ly
Bi Seynt Sibiles kirke."

After this victory, the king rode a-hunting on "Blakeowe more," and, after having given a feast at Pickering, he went to York, and there met Arlaund with Horn, and caused his subjects to swear fealty to the latter as his successor. Nine months afterwards came three kings out of Ireland:—

"Out of Yrlond com kinges thre;
Ther names can y telle the
Wele withouten les.
Ferwele and Winwald wern ther to,
Malkan king was on of tho,
Proude in ich a pres:
Al Westmerland stroyed thay.
The word com on a Whissonday
To king Hatheolf at his des."

He assembled his host, and met the Irish army on "Staynes more." In the battle two of the Irish kings were slain, but Hatheolf himself fell by the hand of Malkan, after having been overpowered by the multitude of his assailants. The Irish withdrew to their own country, but

"an erl of Northumberland," taking occasion of the death of the king, and of the minority of his son, seized upon his kingdom, and Arlaund fled with Horn to the court of Houlac, a king who reigned "fer southe in Inglond." Here his intercourse with the king's only daughter, Rimneld, was discovered by Wigard and Wikele, and he was obliged to fly the country. Horn now took the name of Godebounde, and rode west till he came to Wales. He there met a knight in the midst of a forest, who conducted him to king "Elydan," who held his court at "Snowedoune," where he obtained great favour.

While he resided at Snowdon, Elydan's son Finlak, who was a king in Ireland, sent messengers to request aid against the same Irish who had invaded Horn's own country. The messengers returned with a favorable answer, and were accompanied by Horn himself.

"Hem com an haven wele to hand,
That Yolkil is cleped in Irland,
The court was ther biside;
Finlawe king ther thai fande,
For to here titheande
Oȝain hem gan ride."

The king of Wales with his men was detained by contrary winds; Horn and the two sons of the Irish king with their army were obliged to fight against superior numbers; the two princes were taken and put to death, and Horn wounded, though not till after he had slain Malkan, whose death was followed by the defeat of the invading army. Finlak's daughter, Acula, tended Horn's wounds, and became deeply enamoured of him. She declared to him her love, but he was faithful to Rimneld, and, the seven years of his absence being passed, with a hundred knights he set

out to visit her, rescued her from king "Moging," who would have married her, slew Wigard, and compelled Wikele to confess his treason. He then returned to Northumberland, to recover his hereditary possessions, which, it appears, had been usurped by Thorbrond. Here the poem ends abruptly by a defect of the MS.

The "chansons de geste," whether French or English, form a curious and valuable class of the literary productions of the middle ages. We are inclined to attribute their formation generally to the thirteenth century—but they were evidently made upon some older models. Perhaps some of them preserve much of the character and circumstance of those models, whilst others are little better than modern imitations founded upon some circumstance or some character to which the others have contained allusions. Our own romances of this class are peculiarly interesting to us, as being, perhaps, the last form which the Saxon romances took; and, though the stories in their present shape belong to the wars with the Danes in England, we are by no means sure that some of them are not modern versions of the older mythic legends, which, in the traditions that lived amongst the people, were applied to times with which that people was more familiar, and to places in the land where they then dwelt. Thus, the various versions of the romance of Horn, as well as the history of Hereward's younger days, may all be so many different appropriations of an early and purely Saxon legend. We should welcome the appearance of a complete collection of these romances in the English and French versions, which should include Horn, Waldef, with illustrations from the Latin Waldeus, Havelok, Guy of Warwick, Bevis of Hampton, &c.

ESSAY IV.

ON PROVERBS AND POPULAR SAYINGS.

HE distinguishing characteristics of a people are most prominently visible among its uncultivated peasantry—in their superstitions and their prejudices, their legends and their proverbs. The great body of these, like their language, have not originated among the people themselves, but have been brought away in their separation from the general stock, and have afterwards been modified in different ways by time and outward circumstances. Civilization and education, as they become general, exert a powerful tendency to soften down the stronger marks of national character, and to destroy the old and deeply-rooted prejudices in which those marks live. In our country, how speedily are the legends and superstitions of the peasantry passing away before the rod of the schoolmaster, whom the present day has sent abroad! Yet England is still extremely rich in proverbs, as well as in popular superstitions. Both bear strong marks of a northern origin, and it is probable that not a few of them were as familiar in the mouths of our Saxon forefathers who came in under the banners of Hengst and Horsa in the fifth century, as they are in those of our contemporaries of the nineteenth. Of our proverbs, however, many have been introduced at a

comparatively modern period from external sources, and many have arisen from circumstances and ideas of a later growth, so that it is interesting to us to know, not only our own proverbs at different periods, but also those of surrounding nations. The collecting of oral proverbs is by no means a difficult or a barren task; and in manuscripts and printed books we have collections of the proverbs of different periods from the eleventh and twelfth centuries to the present day.

Amid the exertions which have been made by the learned of the different nations of western Europe to collect and preserve their national superstitions and proverbs, little had been done, and that very inefficiently, for France, which is the more to be regretted, as those particularly of the middle and northern parts bear so many marks of a Teutonic origin. A most judicious and useful collection was made by M. Pluquet, the *Contes populaires, préjugés, patois, proverbes, &c. de l'arrondissement de Bayeux*, of which a second edition was published in 1834. This book is restricted to the superstitions, dialect, and proverbs, of the district of Bayeux in Normandy, a country abounding in recollections of by-gone days. A remarkable passage, which proves how long were preserved, not only the superstitions and manners, but even the language, of the original Northmen in this place, is quoted by M. Pluquet in his preface from the metrical chronicle of Benoît de Sainte-More, which was written in the twelfth century. William Longue-épée, the second duke of Normandy, speaking to Boton count of Bessin of the education he would give his son Richard, expresses a great desire that he should know Danish. "If," said he, "I gave him ever so good an education at Rouen, he would not learn t-

talk Danish, because not a word of Danish is spoken there. I would have him go to school where they can talk this language. The people of Rouen can talk nothing but *Romanz* (Norman French); but at Bayeux there are plenty who can speak only Danish, and, therefore, Sir count Boton, I wish that you should take him with you, and that you should carefully instruct him."

"Se à Roem le faz garder,
E norir gaires lungement,
Il ne sara parler neient
Daneis; kar nul ne l' i parole.
Si voil k'il seit à tele escole,
Ke as Daneis sace parler.
Se ne sevent neient forz Romanz;
Mez à Baiues en a tanz,
Ki ne sevent parler se Daneis non,
E pur ço, sire quens Boton,
Voil ke vos l'aiez ensemle od vos,
E de li enseigner curios."

"It results from this curious passage," observes M. Pluquet, "that it was at Bayeux that the Normans preserved longest their primitive idiom. It is, therefore, in this district that we may hope still to find some traces of it."

As might be expected, the superstitions of this district, as far as M. Pluquet has collected notices of them, are essentially northern in their character, and bear a close resemblance to those which have existed, and which still exist, in England. The first part of his book consists of popular legends, and of some notes of the characteristics of the different personages of the popular mythology. The *Hans* of the people of the district of Bayeux, or the spirits which haunt houses, rendering them uninhabitable by the

noises they make, and the pranks they play, are beings familiar to the creed of the English peasantry, as are also the *Revenans*, or ghosts of departed persons, who appear in their former shape until their demands or their wishes be fulfilled. The *Fifollets* (*feux-follets*) are our Jack-o'-lanterns, lights that appear on bogs and stagnant waters, which the peasant believes to be evil spirits who delight in leading astray unwary travellers. The *Létiche* is a white animal that appears by night, quite harmless, and supposed to be the spirit of an infant that has died before baptism. The *Lubin* is a phantom formed like a wolf, which wanders by night, endeavouring to make its entrance into the cemeteries. The *Goubelin*, or *Gobelin*, is our well-known domestic spirit; he takes up his residence at a farm-house, where he leads out the horses to drink, and feeds them, generally taking one or two under his more especial protection. He awakens the idle servants, and amuses himself with overthrowing and displacing the furniture, accompanying his pranks with loud and continued bursts of laughter. The goubelin is almost always invisible, except when he chooses to play his pranks in the shape of a horse, when he places himself by the side of a road ready saddled and bridled. But woe to the person that may chance to mount him!—he gallops away, prances about, plays all kinds of tricks, and generally finishes by leaving his rider in a bog or a horse-pond. The goubelin, in this character, answers to a being of our popular creed which in the north of England is called a Brag. Ritson tells a story of one of these beings, who placed himself by the highway in the form of a pony—a person mounted on his back, was carried away at full speed, and at last thrown into a pond, his bearer disappearing with a peal of laughter.

The *Loup-garou*, the werwolf of the older English, is a well-known creation of superstition—a man changed into a wolf. The people of Bayeux believe the transformation to last for three or seven years. The loup-garou appears generally in the night; and the only possible way by which the person so transformed may be delivered, is by wounding the animal with a key, so as to cause an effusion of blood. Another personage of the Norman superstition is the *Rongeur d'os*, a phantom in the shape of a great dog, which wanders about the streets of Bayeux in the winter nights, gnawing bones and dragging chains along with it, and bearing some resemblance to the Yorkshire Barguest.

The superstitious prejudices and notions of the peasantry of Bayeux bear, also, a great resemblance to those of our own. Some of the most remarkable are those which follow. Asses are believed to have borne a black cross on their back ever since Christ rode on one into Jerusalem. On Christmas night animals talk. During the eight days before Christmas (*les avents de Noël*) apparitions are most frequent, and sorcerers have most power. A collar made of pieces of cork causes the milk to pass from dogs and cats. The bite of a mad dog is cured by the application of a part of its hair to the wound. Screech-owls coming to a house presage the death of one of its inhabitants. To find a horse-shoe is very lucky. The fever may be cured by carrying nine days on the breast a living spider shut up in a nut-shell. If the eyes of one of the young of a swallow be put out, the mother bird will bring from the sea-shore a little stone which will immediately restore its sight: fortunate is the person who finds this little stone in the nest, for it is a miraculous remedy. From the egg of a cock is produced a serpent. A hen which crows like a cock, announces

the death of its master or its own. The saying thus given by Pluquet is, in some parts of Normandy, given as follows, with an additional clause :—"*Une poule qui chante le coq, et une fille qui siffle, portent malheur dans la maison.*" A sprig of trefoil, which has by chance four leaves instead of three, possesses the power of rendering a person invisible. So, in the north of England, the possession of a sprig of four-leaved clover is believed to give the power of seeing fairies and spirits, and of detecting witchcraft. The number thirteen is very unlucky: if thirteen people sit together at table, one will die before the end of the year.

The larger part of M. Pluquet's book is occupied with the patois of the district, and with names of places which he considers to be of northern derivation. The chapter of *Proverbes, dictons, et locutions particulières,* is curious and valuable. The proverb "*Traître comme un âne rouge*" is common to several other countries. Another proverb warns us against a red beard and black hair—

> "Barbe rouge et noirs cheveux,
> Guettes t'en, si tu peux."

Another cautions us against burning green wood, eating bread warm from the oven, and drinking cider new from the press—

> "Bois vert, pain chaud, et cidre nouveau,
> Mettent la maison à vau l'eau."

The subject of eating and drinking has given rise to many proverbs in most countries—"Good liquor needs no cork," say the people of Bayeux, because, we imagine, it is soon drunk: "*A bon bère, il ne faut pas de bouchon ;*" and again, "*Fleur n'est pas pomme, et pomme n'est pas bère.*

When it rains and the sun shines at the same time, the Normans say that the devil is beating his wife. We think we have heard a similar saying in England. The young girls have a saying which refers to a circumstance in the legend of St. Nicolas—

"Patron des filles, saint Nicolas,
Mariez nous, ne tardez pas."

There is another Norman saying, not mentioned by Pluquet, of a maid who does not marry—"*Elle restera pour coiffer sainte Katherine.*" We have in England a proverb, "Little and little make mickle," which appears again under the shape, "By little and little the bird makes his nest"—so the people of Bayeux say—

"Petit à petit
L'oiseau fait son nid."

Among M. Pluquet's Bayeux proverbs we find few which relate to eating: there is, however, one in which we are not inclined to put much faith: it is—

"Soupe avant, soupe après,
Fait vivre cent ans près."

The Normans, it must be observed, are passionately fond of soup.

In Normandy, as in England, observations on the weather at particular times, and on its consequences, give rise to many popular sayings among the peasantry. These sayings, commonly in rhyme, are the true "shepherd's calendar." The people of Bayeux have a saying that a windy year brings plenty of apples—

"Année venteuse,
Année pommeuse."

Again, they say of the month of April—

"Avril le doux,
Quand il se fâche, le pis de tout."

In England we have an old saying, "February fill dyke;' so the Norsans—"*Février emplit les fosses; Mars les sèche.*" And, again, of the same month—

"Février qui donne neige,
Bel été nous plége."

and—

"Pluie de Février
Vaut jus de fumier."

A cold May and a hot June, say the people of Bayeux, bring abundance both of bread and of wine—

"Froid Mai et chaud Juin
Donnent pain et vin."

They have a similar saying in Germany—

"Kühler Mai
Giebt guten wein und vieles heu."

"A cold May
Gives good wine and much hay!"

The result of a rainy Easter is somewhat similar—

"Pâques pluvieux,
An fromenteux."

Sunshine on the day of St. Eulalia brings plenty of apples, and consequently of cider—

"Si le soleil rit le jour Sainte-Eulalie,
Il y aura pommes et cidre à folie."

A rainy morning has been proved by experience not always to portend a rainy day, but more commonly the contrary — hence the Normans have a saying—

"Pluie du matin
N'arrête pas le pélerin."

So again—

"Rouge rosée au matin
C'est beau temps pour le pélerin."

If we remember right, our peasantry in some of the agricultural districts have a saying—

"Evening red and morning gray
Always bring a pleasant day."

So in German—

"Der morgen grau, der abend roth,
Ist ein guter wetter-both."

"Morning gray and evening red,
Is a good sign of the weather."

And in French—

"Rouge soir et blanc matin,
Rend joye au cœur des pélerins."

The close resemblance of these proverbs to each other in different languages is sometimes very remarkable; thus we say in English—

"A rainbow in the morning,
Is to shepherds a warning;
A rainbow at night,
Is the shepherds' delight."

Almost the identical rhymes are found in German—

"Regenbogen am morgen
Macht dem schäfer sorgen;
Regenbogen am abend
Ist dem schäfer labend."

"A rainbow in the morning,
Makes sorrow to the shepherd;
A rainbow in the evening,
Is to the shepherd agreeable."

One half of this "saw" is found in French—

"L'arc-en-ciel du soir
Fait beau temps paroir."

Every country has its proverbs which relate to particular places, and to circumstances connected with them, as that relating to Cornwall,—

"By *tre*, *pol*, and *pen*,
You shall know the Cornish-men;"

or that of Newcastle, "A Scottish man and a Newcastle grindstone travel all the world over;" or the popular rhyme concerning the hill of Turloim in Perthshire—

"On Turloim-tap [*top*]
There is a mist;
And in the mist
There is a kist [*chest*];
And on the kist
There is a cap [*cup*];
And in the cap
There is a drap [*drop*];
Tak up the cap,
And drink the drap,
And leave the cap
On Turloim-tap."

M. Pluquet's book affords us many instances of such proverbs: as of the lambs of Caumont—"It is like the lambs of Caumont: three are enough to strangle a wolf." So of the river Drôme, which seems to have been very disastrous both to man and beast—

> "La rivière de Drôme
> A tous les ans cheval ou homme."

And of Granville, which is a very small place—

> "Granville, grand vilain,
> Une église et un moulin;
> On voit Granville tout à plein."

An ancient tract* which, with its illustrations, forms the body of a book, published in Paris by M. Crapelet in 1831, under the title of *Proverbes et dictons populaires*, begins with an enumeration of the appropriate names for an assembly of people of different ranks and orders, as also of various kinds of domestic animals: as an "assembly of knights," a "company of clerks," a "mob of villans," &c. in the application of which our forefathers seem to have been very exact. Next follows an enumeration of proverbial phrases which had become characteristic of certain orders of people. The greediness of the priesthood gave rise to the saying "the avarice of the ecclesiastics"—"*Avarisce de provoire.*" The white monks were distinguished by their covetousness—*Convoitise de moines*

* This tract, more or less complete, is not uncommon in ancient manuscripts. For example, the first part, as far as the "discord of the chapter," the "pride of the Templars," and the "vain-glory of the Hospitallers," is contained in *MS. Arundel*, No. 220 (in the British Museum), where the piece concludes by declaring that all the things therein enumerated are not worth a penny.

blancs," and the black monks by their ambition and jealousy of others—"*Envie de moines ners ;*" the Templars by their pride—"*Orgueil de Templiers,*" and the Hospitallers, or knights of St. John of Jerusalem, by their vanity and presumption—"*Boban d'Ospitaliers.*" We learn, also, from these sayings that the chapters of canons were proverbial for the discord and dissensions which generally reigned amongst them—"*Descort de chapitre.*"

We have, also, in this collection, many sayings relating to towns and districts ; for instance, Cambrai in the thirteenth century was famous for its beer, Tournai for its butter—"*Cervoise de Canbray*"—"*Buriers de Tornai.*" It would seem that in former times ale was much more commonly used in France than at present.

"The use of beer has always existed in France, because the vines did not produce enough for the consumption of the people. Thus, even at Paris, they generally began their meal with beer and finished with wine, which is still the custom in Flanders and in several of our northern departments. The monks had their breweries, which they readily abandoned when the culture of the vine became more extensive, and the use of beer less general. In 1264 Stephen Boilève made statutes for brewers, but the small consumption of beer rendered them almost useless. In these statutes mention is made of a beer distinct from *cervoise ;* it is there called *godale,* a word which appears to be formed from the two English words *good ale* (bonne ale, bière, bière douce), much esteemed in England, since it has given rise to the proverb—*Good ale is meat, drink, and cloth.* All that is left to us of our ancient *godale,* are the words *godaille* and *godailler,* to express the habitual

debauch of people who meet only to drink. Under Charles VI, and Charles VII, the brewing of beer was again carried on with great activity, doubtlessly on account of the presence of the English, who were for fifteen years masters of Paris. It has been remarked that always in times of war and of public calamities the consumption of wine diminished much, and that of beer increased proportionally. In 1689, the brewers consumed eighty thousand *setiers* of barley, without reckoning the wheat used for the brewing of white beer. The same observation was made during the Seven Years' War; and it is much to be feared that the fabrication of beer will increase more than ever in the course of this year, 1831." (*Crapelet*, p. 44.)

M. Crapelet's prophecy seems not to have been fulfilled: his countrymen continue to drink more wine than ale, and have as yet begun to manifest no increasing partiality for the latter beverage. We must, however, protest against his supposition that *good ale* in England was ever used as a term for a particular kind of ale; the English proverb applies merely to *ale* that is *good*, as distinguished from that of an inferior kind—or, as the old song has it, to

"Jolly good ale and old."

The use of butter also experienced its vicissitudes, being sometimes permitted during Lent, and sometimes forbidden. It was not without many concessions and promises of pious works, that Charles V and Anne of Bretagne, at different periods, procured a permission from the Roman pontiff to use butter and milk during Lent, even under pretence of illness. When it became customary to buy this permission

with money, the tax upon the use of butter during this season was productive of a considerable revenue to the church.

One of these sayings of the thirteenth century—"*Li jureor de Bâiex*"—seems to show the great validity of the oaths taken at the city of Bayeux, and illustrates a circumstance connected with English history.

"According to Wace and the tapestry of Bayeux, it was in this city that William the Conqueror received the oath of Harold, which he carefully consecrated by solemn religious ceremony. This fact is contradicted by Ordericus Vitalis and William of Poitiers; but, supposing even that it is not quite authentic, it proves, at least, that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries great importance was attached to oaths taken on the reliques of the churches of Bayeux."—(*Crapelet*, p. 50.)

Among the different people with whose names our collector of sayings was familiar, the sagest men were in Lombardy—"*Li plus saige homme sont en Lombardie*," and the wisest merchants in Tuscany—"*Li plus saige marcheant sont en Tosquanne;*" an allusion, says M. Crapelet, to the Pisans and the Florentines, who, in concert with the Venetians and Genoese, managed the commerce of the Mediterranean and of the East. The most deceitful people were the Saracens—"*Li plus engigneor en Sarrazienesme.*" The people of Hungary bore at this period the character of traitors—"*Li plus trahitre en Hongrie;*" the Greeks that of being perfidious—"*Li plus traïteur sont en Gresce;*" and the Sclavonians of being slavish—"*Li plus serf sont en Esclavonie.*" It is even said that our word *slave* is derived from the name of this latter people, who had been reduced to servitude by Charlemagne, and their name is derived

from a word in their own tongue which signifies *glory*. "Kings and people," observes M. Crapelet, in his manner, "ought not to forget the lesson thus presented to them by a word, that there is no military *glory* without slavery!"

During the thirteenth century we learn, from these sayings, that the people most subject to anger were the Germans—"*Li plus ireux sont en Alemaingne;*" the most frank and open were to be found in France—"*Li plus apert home en France:*" and the most foolish and ignorant in Bretaigne—"*Li plus sot en Bretaingne.*" The Normans were the most inquisitive; everybody was troubled with their inquiries as to where he was going, whence he came, and what was his business—"*Li plus enquérant en Normandie: où aliax? que quériax? dont véniax?*" The handsomest women were thought to be those of Flanders—"*Les plus belles femes sont en Flandres,*" a judgment which M. Crapelet is inclined to dispute; and the handsomest men were the Germans—"*Li plus bel home en Alemaigne,*" a point which he thinks may be conceded without necessarily exciting the jealousy of his countrymen, adding, with the air of a philosopher, that "la rivalité des nations pour la beauté des hommes ne sauroit être dangereuse." The greatest men were the Danes—"*Li plus grant en Danemarche;*" the best drinkers, even then, were the people of merry England—"*Li mieldre buveor en Engleterre;*" the most wandering and beggarly people were the Scotch—"*Li plus truant en Escoce;*" and the wildest and most uncultivated in Ireland—"*Li plus sauvage sont en Irelande.*"

At the end of M. Crapelet's book are printed several early French poems, illustrative more or less of his subject. The first three, the "Cries of Paris" by Guillaume de la Vilenueve, the poem "d'un Mercier," and "le Dit des

Marcheans," give us curious lists of the articles of food and dress which were then sold and bought, and throw much light on the domestic life and manners of former days. These are followed by a poem entitled "The proverbs of the count of Bretaigne." It consists of stanzas of six lines, each followed by a proverb, which is sometimes in two lines, at others in one, and is always attributed to the villan—"ce dit li vilains." The first stanza, which speaks of proverbs as old things, runs thus—

"Qui les proverbes fist
Premierement bien dist,
Au tans qu'alors estoit;
Or est tout en respit,
En ne chante ne lit
D'annor en nul endroit:
'Que [a] la bone denrée,
A mauvaise oubliée,'—
Ce dit li vilains."

"He who first made proverbs spoke well to the people of his time; now all is forgotten, people neither sing nor read of honour in any place: 'he who has the good ware, has forgotten the bad,' says the villan." In the first line of the proverb there seems to be an error in the MS., or in M. Crapelet's transcript, which we have supplied by the addition between brackets. In one part of this poem the value of proverbs is strongly insisted upon:

"Qui par droit velt valoir,
Il fera grant savoir
S'au proverbes entent."

This, and the piece which follows it, are the only parts of M. Crapelet's book which contain what are properly

termed proverbs, and many of the proverbs here given are still in use. Thus, we have the saying, "Who likes not his business, his business likes not him"—

"Qui n'aime son mestier,
Ne son mestier lui,—
Ce dit li vilains."

And we also find the proverb, "Strike when the iron is hot," under this form—

"Qui de fer velt ouvrer,
Si l'atende à chaufer,—
Ce dit li vilains."

So again, we say "Every truth is not to be told," which the count of Bretaigne gives thus—

"Tuit voir ne sont à savoir,—
Ce dit li vilains."

Much of our vernacular literature during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, consisted of translations from, and imitations of, the French. We have an imitation of this poem of the count of Bretaigne in English, apparently of the latter part of the thirteenth century, which has not hitherto been noticed, written in exactly the same kind of verse; but, what is very singular, the proverbs are all attributed, not to the villan (or peasant), but to a person named Hending.* This Hending is said in the poem to be

* *MS. Harl.* No. 2253, fol. 125. This MS. bears internal evidence of having been written during the reign of Edward II, but very many of the things contained in it are works of the thirteenth century, one or two as old as the reign of Henry III, having been written at the period of the battles of Lewes and Evesham. There are several other manuscripts of this poem.

the son of Marcolf, a popular character in the middle ages. The poem of the proverbs of Hending, which has been published in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, commences thus—

"Mon that wol of wysdam ȝeren,
At wyse Hendyng he may leren,
That wes Marcolyes sone;
Gode thonkes and monie thewes
Forte teche fele shrewes,
For that wes ever is wone."

In this poem of the proverbs of Hending, as in those of the count of Bretaigne, each stanza is a development of the idea presented by the proverb which follows, though not always very much to the purpose. Most of the proverbs which it contains are still preserved. Thus we have the saying "A sore eye is better than all blind"—

"ȝef thou art of thohtes lyht,
And thou falle for un-myht
In a wycked synne;
Loke that thou do hit so selde,
In that sunne that thou ne elde,
That thou ne deȝe ther-inne:
'Betere is eyȝe sor then al blynd,'
Quoth Hendyng."

* *Mon*, man—*wol*, will—*ȝeren*, hear—*leren*, learn—*wes*, was—*monie*, many—*thewes*, good manners—*forte*, for to—*fele*, many—*is wone*, his custom.

† *ȝef*, if—*thohtes*, thought—*un-myht*, weakness—*hit*, it—*selde*, seldom—*sunne*, sin—*ne elde*, become not old—*deȝe*, die.

Again, we have the proverb quoted by Hudibras, as a palliation for his cowardice—

"He that fights and runs away,
Will live to fight another day,"

though in our poem very differently explained—

"Ȝef thou wolt fleysh lust overcome,
Thou most fist and fle y-lome,
With eye and with huerte;
Of fleysh lust cometh shame;
Thath hit thunche the body game,
Hit doth the soule smerte:
'Wel fyth that wel flyth'
Quoth Hendyng." *

So also our common saying, "A fool's bolt is soon shot,"—

"Wis mon halt is wordes ynne,
For he nul no gle bygynne,
Er he have tempred is pype;
Sot is sot, and that is sene,
For he wol speke wordes grene,
Er then hue buen rype:
'Sottes bolt is sone shote,'
Quoth Hendyng." †

And similarly the adage, "a burnt child dreads the fire,"—

* *Wolt*, wilt—*fleysh*, flesh—*fist*, fight—*y-lome*, quickly—*huerte*, heart—*thath*, though—*thunche*, seem—*doth*, causeth—*smerte*, to smart—*fyth*, fight—*flyth*, flieth.

† *Wis mon halt is*, the wise man holds his—*ynne*, in—*nul*, will not—*gle*, mirth—*er*, before—*sot*, fool—*sene*, seen—*hue*, they—*buen*, be.

"Drath thyn hond sone aȝeyne,
ȝef men the doth a wycke theyn,
Ther thyn ahte is lend;
So that child with-draweth his hond
From the fur and the brond,
That hath by-fore bue brend.
'Brend child fur dredeth,'
Quoth Hendyng."

Another of these proverbs is, "The honey is bought dear, that is licked from the thorne:"—

"Strong ys ahte forte gete,
Ant wicke when me hit shal lete;
Wys mon, take thou ȝeme;
Al to dere is botht that ware,
That ne may wythoute care
Monnes herte queme:
'Dere is botht the hony that is licked of the thorne,'
Quoth Hendyng." †

The last of the poems printed by M. Crapelet is a collection of proverbs, also by the count of Bretaigne, under the title of "De Marcoul et de Salemon;" these two persons, of whom one is the same Marcolf who has been already mentioned as the father of "Hendyng," being made to utter proverbs alternately. Though many of these are only moral observations, yet there are some sayings of

* *Drath*, draw—*sone aȝeyne*, soon back—*the*, thee—*wicke theyn*, wicked thing—*ahte*, property—*fur*, fire—*brond*, brand—*bue*, been—*brend*, burnt.

† *Ahte*, property—*forte gete*, for to get—*lete*, obstruct—*take thou ȝeme*, take care—*al to dere*, all too dear—*botht*, bought—*monnes herte queme*, man's heart please.

a popular character. Thus Solomon says, "he is a fool who carries with him all he has;" to which Marcolf answers, "who carries nothing, will lose nothing."

"Fox est cil qui menra
O soi quanqu'il a,
Ci di Salemons:
Qui riens ne portera,
Jà riens ne li chierra,
Marcol li respont." (p. 190.)

Collections of early French proverbs, more or less extensive, are of no uncommon occurrence in manuscripts. One of the best and largest collections we have seen is in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, (No. 450, fol. 252.) We shall give a few specimens of these proverbs, but we quote them more particularly for the purpose of comparing some of them with the Latin proverbs of the twelfth century, in a MS. of Trinity College, Cambridge. "Woe to the priest," says one of them, "who blames his own reliques!"—(Dehez eit le prestre qi blame se[s] reliques.) "Fools," says another, "go to vespers, and wise men to matins,"—(Fous vount à vespres, e sages à matines.) "He loses his Alleluya, who chaunts it at the ox's tail,"—(Il perd sa Alleluya que à cueil de boef le chaunt.) "We should take care where we lye in winter, and where we dine in Lent,"—(L'en deyt garder où l'en gist en yver, et ou l'en dine en quarreme.) "It is a foreign land where the cow drives away the ox,"—(En estraunge terre chace la vache le boef.) "Who leaves the court, the court leaves him,"—(Qi se esloingne de la court, e la court de ly;) a proverb which, in a somewhat different form, we

have already quoted from those of the count of Bretaigne. Again, "threats are not spears,—(Manaces ne sunt launces);" and, "people who are threatened live, those who are beheaded die,—(Manacées vivent, decollez morrunt);" a proverb at least as old as the twelfth century, when we find it in the mouth of Eustace the monk, a free-booter who was engaged in the barons' wars in the days of king John. Eustace had by stratagem led into a bog Cadoc, the seneschal of Normandy, who had undertaken to secure his person. In this dilemma, Cadoc gave vent to his ire in no very measured phrases:—"Says Cadoc, 'If I were out, thy death should be very near; never should any person again be deceived and betrayed by you.' Said Eustace, 'People who are threatened live.'"

"Dist Cadoc: 'Se j'estoie fors,
Molt seroit prochainne ta mors.
Jamais ne seroit cunchiiés
Nus hom par vous ne engigniés.'
Dist Wistasces: 'Manechés vivent.'"
(*Roman d'Eustache le Moine*, v. 2093)

We believe there is also an English proverb answering to it. Another of the collection of French proverbs which we are describing tells us, that "the black hen lays a white egg,—(Neyr geline ponne blank oef);" and another gives us a curious reason why the ox talks not—namely, because he has not enough of tongue, ("Pur ço ne parle boef, q'il n'ad assez de langue.")

In this collection of French proverbs, which is proved by the language to be much older than the time of the manuscript that contains it, we find many which also occur among the proverbs of our own country. For instance,

we say "every bird likes its own nest," a saying which runs thus in the old French:—

"A chescun oysel
Son nye li semble bel."

And which is still popular in Normandy, where it is preserved in this form. (*Pluquet*, p. 124.)

"A tout oiseau
Son nid semble beau."

"It is too late to shut the stable when the horse is gone," is an English and a Scotch proverb, and also a French one: "A tart ferme l'om l'estable, quant le cheval est perduz." We say, "the devil will take his own;" so the French, "De debles vint, à debles irra;" and, "young hypocrite, old devil:" "De juvene papelard veil deable." We have also a proverb, "He who loves me, loves my dog;" in the French, "Qi me eyme, e mon chen." So, "He who gives quickly, gives twice;"—"Qi tost donne, deuz foiz donne;" and, "The pot which goes often to the well, will come home broken at last;"—"Tant va le pot al ewe q'il brise."

A manuscript in Trinity College, Cambridge, (O, 2, 45) written at the beginning of the thirteenth century, contains translations into Latin leonines of some of the more popular English, and, in one or two instances, Norman proverbs of that time. At first the writer has left space for the insertion in red ink of the vernacular proverbs so translated, and in a few instances he has inserted them. It is a collection the more valuable, because made at a period when our authorities for the English proverbs are not common, being confined nearly to a poem of the twelfth century in the Cottonian library relating to a contention

between the owl and the nightingale; and another of the proverbs of king Alfred, of about the same date, or perhaps older, printed in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, which seems to be only an abstract of a longer and more complete metrical collection of proverbs under the name of king Alfred, that is often quoted in the above-mentioned poem of the "Hule and the Nyȝtingal." Among the Latin leonines are several proverbs which occur in each of these poems, and many which are still popular in England. Thus our proverb, "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," is there

"Plus valet in manibus avis unica, quam dupla silvis."

We have a common saying,

"After dinner sit awhile,
After supper walk a mile;"

the latter part of which is thus rhymed in the Trinity manuscript, where it is assumed that the supper is a good one,—

"Qui cœnat plene, debet post tempora cœnæ
Seu diu stare seu passus mille meare."

"Hunger," we say, "is the best sauce," a proverb coincident with which was current in the sixteenth century, when it is quoted by Heywood, "Hunger maketh hard beans soft." In the Latin leonines of the twelfth century, the translator, as in many other instances, has amused himself by giving more than one version. He says,—

"Mollea coctura jejunio fit faba dura."

And again,—

"Mel sapit in dente faba dura, fama veniente."

We say, "praise the day when it is over," a proverb which is thus translated:—

"Vespere detur ei, si laus est danda diei."

Our peasantry will tell us as an established rule that, if it rain on St. Swithin's day, it will continue rainy weather for forty days after. In the twelfth century this observation was applied to the second day of July:

"Si pluit in festo Processi et Martiniani,
Quadraginta dies continuare solet."

In Normandy the same observation is made on the day of St. Gervais:—

"Quand il pleut à la Saint-Gervais,
Il pleut quarante jours après." (*Pluquet.*)

And they have also a similar saying of the day of St. Médard,—

"S'il pleut le jour Saint-Médard,
Il pleuvra quarante jours plus tard." (*Pluquet.*)

"He that comes late to his dinner," says one of these proverbs, "will either dine badly, or lose his place at table:"

"Qui faciendo moram, prandendi protrahit horam,
Aut male prandebit, aut sedis honore carebit."

"All food that pleases the mouth is not good for the belly:"

"Non prodest ventri cibus omnis quod placet ori."

Another proverb of this period seems to prove that the ladies of the loom bore then no very high character for chastity:

"Omnes textrices de ritu sunt meretrices."

The two unpublished collections of proverbs which we have noticed—the French proverbs of the Corpus College manuscript, and the Latin leonines—contain many sayings common to both. Thus we have in the latter (an instance, by the way, in which the original English is inserted,) "Need makes the old wife run:"

"Neode makaþ heald wif eorne."

"Ut cito se portet vetulæ pes cogit oportet."

which is, in the French,—

"Besoigne fait veil troter."

So, again, "When the dog eats his bone, he loves no company:"

"Wil þe hund gnaȝh bon,
i-fere neld he non."

"Dum canis os rodit, sociari pluribus odit."

Which appears in the French collection under this form,—

"Chen en cosyn compaignic ne desire."

"The dog while in the kitchen desires no company." We are told in the one collection, "The cat knows well whose beard she licketh:"

"Wel wot hure cat whas berd he lickat."

"Murilegus bene scit cujus barbam linguere suescit."

This, in the French, is,—

"Chat conoit bien qi barbe il lesche."

We have again, in the Latin,—

"Vis pascit pratum, vis damnat sæpe proba' am;"

the first clause of which is found in the French in nearly the same words:—"La force pest le pré." At the present day we have the saying, "He kisses the child for the sake of the nurse;" in the twelfth century it was thus turned into Latin:

"Osculor hunc ore natum nutricis amore:"

but in the French it is somewhat changed in the wording: "Pur l'amour le chevaler, bees la dame l'esquier." A proverb of the twelfth century told us that, "We may wash and comb a dog as much as we will, yet it will still remain but a dog:"—

"Ablue, pecte canem, canis est, quia permanet idem."

In the French collection we find the same proverb: "Lavez chen, peignez chen, toute vois n'est chien qe chen." A good and old English proverb is, "Men carve broad thongs from an unbought hide." It was popular in the twelfth century,—

"De cute non propria maxima corrigia."

It appears in the French collection, "D'ottre quir large currie," and is found among the proverbs of Hending in the thirteenth century:

"Thah uch mon by-swyke me,
That of my god maketh him fre
Forte gete word;
Ant him-self is the meste qued
That may breke eny bred
At ys onne bord:
'Of un-boht hude men kerveth brod thong,'
Quoth Hendyng." *

It again occurs in Heywood's collection in the sixteenth century.

It will be seen at once, from the brief comparison which we have had occasion to make, that there is much similarity between the proverbs of France and England. We must not, however, conclude hence that either country has borrowed its proverbs from the other. It would, indeed, be a vain labour to seek the origin of proverbs in general, or of those of a particular people, the body of whose proverbs is, in every instance, coeval with the people themselves, coeval with their language and their superstitions, and more or less congenial to their character.

A very singular and ingenious (though truly absurd) attempt was made a few years ago to derive not only our proverbs, but our nursery rhymes, from a most extraordinary source.†

* *Thah uch mon by-swyke*, though every man deceive—*god*, good—*forte gete*, for to get—*ant*, and—*meste qued*, worst—*breke eny bred*, break any bread—*ys onne bord*, his own board, table—*un-boht hude*, unbought hide.

† 'An Essay on the Archæology of our Popular Phrases and Nursery Rhymes,' by John Bellenden Ker, Esq. First edition; London, Longman, 1834. Second edition, Vol. I; London, Longman, 1835. Two other volumes followed.

In days of yore, somewhere about the time when Charlemagne, that "bigoted and ferocious tool of the pope," was oppressing the Saxons on the Continent, and when the Anglo-Saxons held possession of this island, it was a sad time for the poor farmers and their labourers, ground and oppressed as they were by "a foreign and onerous church-sway, bringing with it a ministry to which a goaded people imputed fraud and vexation." Loud and vigorous, though, as it appears, useless, were the outcries of the oppressed; much and various were the scorn and insult heaped upon them by their oppressors. There is outcry enough at the present day, heaven knows; but it is child's play to what might then be heard in every corner and in every street. Valuable to us, in these our troublous times, would be the history of those commotions; but, unhappily, no historian, no chronicler, has deigned even to notice them. The only documents which throw any light upon the subject have been preserved in a singular and unlooked-for form,—in a form after the antiquary's own heart; and for their discovery, for the interpretation of the untranslatable language in which they are written, we are indebted to John Bellenden Ker. How well can we figure him to our imagination, sitting night after night in his solitary chamber, placing together and considering anxiously and laboriously letter after letter, word after word, sentence after sentence, before this important piece of history came to light.

It appears that the monks and priests succeeded always in keeping the power in their own hands. The peasantry, oppressed and insulted, and at the same time unable to help themselves, sought some consolation in making lampoons on their tormentors, in the shape of songs, in which

they uttered somewhat freely their complaints and their imprecations. For a time, the other party paid no attention to these squibs of a mob which they despised on account of its weakness, till at length they became so numerous and so violent as to call for some decisive measures.

"The outrageous bearing of the satellites of the Roman church, under the protection of this imperial scourge, increased from day to day the number and circulation of these popular execrations, till their rifeness produced an urgency to rid the church of this perplexing mode of stigmatising the conduct of its members. The remedy was ingenious, and worthy of the astuteness of friars. An unparalleled and constant corruption of the dialect in which they were composed was taken advantage of, and the invective of the lampoon was gradually undermined by the introduction of a harmless, unmeaning medley of a precisely similar sound and metre, in the latest forms of the altered dialect; till in time the original import was forgotten, and its venom and familiar use replaced by the present *Nursery Rhymes*." (Vol. i, p. 246, new edit.)

It is in these *Nursery Rhymes* that now exist the only documents of the history of those commotions to which we have alluded. We must indeed laud the patience and foresight of these men, who, not being able by one stroke of their wand to annihilate at once the songs of their enemies, were content to submit themselves to all the present inconveniences which arose from them, and to adopt a method so slow, but yet so sure, for the delivery of their descendants and successors. "By whatever hands the scheme was accomplished, its success has been complete, and the ingenuity and dexterity employed conspicuous;

for, while not a trace of the former meaning has been suffered to remain, not a particle or note of either sound or metre has been lost to the public ear, in which their echoes still continue to resound in their various and wonted proportions." (*Ib.*)

Three dozen examples, precisely, has Mr. Ker given us of these singular compositions, which all breathe equal vengeance against the parson and the tithe-collector. It appears from some of them that the people were then much oppressed by select vestries, who were ever grinding them with new rates, and demands for new contributions; and the first of their songs which we shall quote seems to have been composed when the vestry was in the habit of sitting in committee at a village alehouse, where their shouts of satisfaction at every new rate were perhaps rendered more audible by the brown-stout of the good man of the house. "It would seem," says Mr. Ker, "some church-rate is referred to, where the clergy assessed, but did not pay." It may be so; and we can easily fancy the poor labourer wetting his whistle perhaps with inferior swipes, and singing loudly and ferociously these homely rhymes, smothering his indignation for the present in threats of future retribution. Thus, then, or something in this manner, he sang in home-spun ballad rhyme,—

"Hear their insolent clamour!
The committee, what axes
From us church-ridden elves
Nought but rates and new taxes.
There they sit in the tap-room,
Nor once think of compassion:
We must pummel their noddles,
If they grind in this fashion.

Let us stop their long speeches,
Their high vaunting words;
And when they're gone to pot,
We shall all live like lords."

In the "outlandish" tongue, indeed, which people spoke in those days, the song ran thus—

"Guise guise gae'n dæer!
Weêr schell-hey waene daer
Op stuyrs aendoen stuyrs;
End in mêlyd is schem baer.
Dere ei! met een ouwel-man!
D'aet, woed n'aet, sie ee is Par-heers.
Hye tuck heim by die left legghe
End seer ruwe hem doe aen stuyrs." (p. 259)

This song the cunning and politic monks exchanged for the following, which, as our readers will observe, might be passed upon a dull and illiterate peasantry for the original, whose meaning and point are entirely destroyed.

"Goosy goosy gander!
Where shall I wander?
Up stairs and down stairs,
And in my lady's chamber;
There I met an old man
That would not say his prayers:
I took him by the left leg,
And threw him down stairs."

What the monks failed to obtain by open extortion they wheedled out of people's pockets by their cunning tales and persuasive speeches. We have at times had the luck to hear the following ditty:

"Jack Sprat
Had a cat:
It had but one ear;
It went to buy butter
When butter was dear."

But we did not then know that this wretched monkish composition had been smuggled in instead of the following song, which laments in pathetic strains the miseries of poor cloddy—for so the husbandman is designated—and the system of imposition to which he was exposed:

"Jackes praet
Huydt er guit;
'Et huydt Bot wan hier;
'Et wint toe Baei Bot er;
Wee 'n Bot er! Wo aes dij hier!" (p. 257.)

Which, being translated, sounds somewhat thus.

"The tales of the parson,
Faith! they're all mighty good!
They fill the rogue's belly
With poor cloddy's food.
These smooth-faced tormentors
Live upon cloddy's labours,
While cloddy, poor soul!
Must go beg of his neighbours."

The great ally of the priest was the lawyer: in the following song they are introduced together, and are equally stigmatised for their grinding propensities.

"The parson and lawyer,
Who sit at their ease,
They'd go grind in hell,
Could they get any fees.

Now, grind them well, parson!
Till their rates be all paid;
And, if the rogues grumble,
Call the law to thine aid."

The four last lines appear to contain an address from the lawyer to the priest; an address, by the way, not altogether disinterested. We think it unnecessary to quote here the original, which the monks superseded by the following song, without doubt familiar to the ears of some of our readers:

"Jack and Jill
Went up the hill
To get a pail of water;
Jack fell down
And broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after." (p. 264.)

In the third line the more common reading is, "to fetch a pail," &c.

The monks employed another method of exaction, which was neither more nor less than begging—the vocation of a large portion of the fraternity. There is preserved a short but pithy exhortation to the poor gulled peasant, to be aware of this insidious mode of tax-gathering, which sounds thus to ears uninitiated:

"Go to bed, Tom!
Go to bed, Tom!
Drunk or sober,
Go to bed, Tom!" (p. 264.)

But of which the actual meaning is—

"Why give all to the friar?
You poor simple boor!
Button your pockets, and
Give him no more!"

"The sum of this short pasquinade," observes Mr. Ker, "amounts to,—don't be a proof of the old saying, of 'a fool and his money are soon parted.'"

The wretchedness of the plundered peasantry sometimes drew forth the commiseration even of those who plundered them; but the expression of such feeling came so little from the heart, that it commonly dwindled into a sneer. Take, for example, the following, in our homely style of translating,—for we approach as nearly as possible the manner of the originals:

"Poor dolt of a sinner!
Thy life is *unasy;*
Thou must labour for prog,
While we live fat and lazy:
Thy diet is slender,
Gain'd with care and anxiety;
While we pick thy bones
To fatten our piety."

This song has degenerated into the vulgar rhyme—

"Cock a-doodle-doo!
Dame has lost her shoe,
Master's broke his fiddlestick,
And don't know what to do." (p. 260.)

Mr. Ker says that it is "a jeering apostrophe to the noodle peasant put into the mouth of the monk by the

Saxon lampooners." We are the more inclined to acquiesce in Mr. Ker's decision on this point, because it is the only instance wherein we find the hard-hearted monks susceptible of compassion. How different is the spirit of the following, evidently sung by the monks over their cups, when exulting at a successful excursion of their provider, the begging friar!

"Little Boo-peep!
His food is good liquor:
When his cup's drained out,
Why, he begs all the quicker.
A fig for their grumbling!
Live the jolly old dog!
Who procures for us all
Good swipes and good prog."

Mr. Ker gives the following explanation of the name which occurs in the first line of this ditty:

"Boo-peep is here the limitour; the friar employed by the monastery in begging about for its support, was formerly [so] called amongst us. *Bod* is the contraction of *bode*, a messenger; and the limitour was he who intruded himself into every man's home to procure provisions for his convent, and pick up all the idle gossip he could besides."

When the monks, wishing to destroy the remembrance of the commons' discontents, and not foreseeing the penetration of Mr. Ker, changed this song into the following tetrastich; the name thus given to the friar was retained, but not understood.

"Little Boo-peep has lost his sheep,
And cannot tell where to find 'em;
Let him alone, they'll [all] come home,
And bring their tails behind 'em." (p. 261.)

We have only thought it necessary to add here a word which Mr. Ker had evidently forgotten.

The last specimen which we shall give, were it not for Mr. Ker's assertion of its antiquity, we should conceive to have been made on the passing of the Reform-bill. In the original it runs thus:

"De volcks hate er holle,
Hij dijd in te noô-weêr;
Hijt lucht in hys stel
End hij vond'et wass teêr. (p. 280.)

Which, translated, might run somewhat in this manner,—

"The mob was unquiet,
And kick'd up a storm:
'Cause the state was all crazy,
And wanted reform."

The monks, wishing to falsify the history, introduced, in place of these rhymes, a certain and somewhat unseemly song, commencing thus:

"The fox had a hole,
He didn't know where," &c.

"It is," says Mr. Ker, "the only composition of this nature I have yet lit upon which leaves the lawyer and priest out of the question. It seems to have been produced on the occasion of some popular dissensions with the managers of the concerns of the commonwealth, by whom the people began to fancy they had been defrauded." For our own part, we are inclined to suppose rather that it is a verse of the prophecies of Merlin, or of Thomas Rhymer, which seemed so extremely improbable that it was omitted when

these productions were transcribed into the English tongue. In this case the allusion would indeed be remarkable.

Such is the lost chapter of our national history which Mr. Ker has brought to light. But he has not stopped here; he has discovered that in a manner similar to that in which our nursery rhymes were formed, though more accidentally, originated all our proverbs and popular sayings. They were not, indeed, all political squibs; but they were at one time sententious moral sayings, which the gradual change of the dialect already alluded to has transformed into unmeaning medleys, bizarre observations which, singularly enough, the peasant still unwittingly applies in the same manner as were once applied the originals.

After all, it cannot be disguised that Mr. Ker's fabric, specious and ingenious as it may appear, is no more solid than that described by the poet—the "fabric of a vision." It is a building without foundations; its author, indeed, starts with an entire misconception of the nature of the ground upon which he has to work. He says:

"It will not be denied, I suppose, that English and Anglo-Saxon are at least sister languages; and if so, as the offspring of a same parent, at one stage of existence an identical language. And if we believe (which I do) the Anglo-Saxon and the Low-Saxon (still surviving, in the main, in what we now call the Dutch) were the same language, our own must at one period have been as these once were, also the same language."—(*Preface to first edition.*)

Hereupon, with wonderful ingenuity, he transforms our proverbs and nursery-rhymes into a sort of modern Dutch sentences and rhymes, having a great similarity of sound to the originals, but differing widely from them in sense. These modern Dutch sentences and rhymes he immediately

supposes to be what he is pleased to call Low-Saxon, and this Low-Saxon to be Anglo-Saxon; and then he supposes them to be English in its original state, it being a sister-language. But it never seems to have occurred to him that we know these languages in all their stages; that, as to our own, we know all its changes, and every form which it has taken from the time of its being first brought into our island. English is not a sister-language to the Anglo-Saxon; it has had no separate origin; but it is merely Anglo-Saxon moulded down in the course of ages. To suppose that the older form of what we now call the Dutch and the Anglo-Saxon were identical, is a mistake: they were, no doubt, cognate languages. But, while Anglo-Saxon has been changed gradually into English, the Dutch language has been undergoing similar changes; and Mr. Ker's versions of our proverbs and nursery-rhymes would be not a jot more intelligible to an Anglo-Saxon than they would have been had he translated them into Chinese.

It cannot be denied that Mr. Ker has shown much ingenuity in the little book of which we are speaking, but at the same time it must be acknowledged that to make his Dutch sentences agree in any measure with the application of the English proverbs, he has been frequently obliged to stretch and misinterpret at least the latter. The first page of his book gives us an instance of this in the popular saying, "He took the bull by the horns," which he explains—"To begin an attack by the best way to succeed in it; to take the surest means to carry the point; to do all that could be done, so that, if failure follows, it is because the attempt was impracticable by the best means within the chief's power. *Hie tuck tije bol by, die hooren's;* q. e. *here head calls contrivance in; that is as it ought to be;*

here the head invokes to its aid the skill of others, that is giving the case all the chance for success it admits of; in the attempt in question the chief (the head) summons to his side ingenuity itself (all that can be had), this is what suits the occasion; thus implying wisdom at the head summoning all the skill within its reach to its assistance," &c.

Mr. Ker has here quite mistaken the meaning of the saying, which implies not the idea of skill but of courage. The person who considered the safest way of attacking the animal would seek to give him a blow from behind, but the courageous man boldly grapples with him in front, and takes the bull by the horns. The application is to a person who begins a business boldly and resolutely: the force of the English proverb must be felt immediately, while the Dutch version of Mr. Ker is spiritless and unmeaning. We may point out as another instance the phrase "It makes my blood run cold" (p. 8), which Mr. Ker considers as meaning, "it puts me in a passion, it exasperates me; and said when something takes place which has a strong effect upon the feelings, *Et muyck's mee bloed er een kule;* q. e. *the muck when blood is joined with it* (poured upon it) *soon grows hot;* soon generates heat; a phenomenon known to every one. So that *it makes my blood run cold;* that is, it sets me all on fire, it inflames me, puts me in a heat."

We certainly have never heard this saying applied to a person who was exasperated—it implies horror, and not passion; and it describes a feeling which most people can understand. The English phrase, Mr. Ker says, is "literal nonsense,"—much more so is the Dutch notion of raising a fire by mixing muck and blood, and the assertion that making one's blood run cold is the same thing as making

it hot and setting it on fire. We could easily multiply examples from this book of the misinterpretation of our proverbs, but we will merely add, that when he tells us (p. 172) that "men in buckram" are "men (soldiers) in fancy, ideal people," and that the Dutch is "*Men in backe ruim;* q. e. *men who are contained within the space of the mouth that brags of them;*" he ought not to have forgotten that Falstaff, from whom the expression became proverbial, talks of much more substantial persons: that, in fact, the people with whom he would have it believed that he had fought, were "rogues in buckram suits."

Mr. Ker has committed an error in attempting to raise a theory to explain the origin of popular proverbs before he had investigated their history. He should have known that our own proverbs have, in the course of some centuries, more or less changed their forms—that words which had become obsolete had often been rejected for others of the same signification—that, with the gradual change from Saxon to English, the sentences which expressed these proverbs have changed often in form and construction—that older proverbs have themselves become obsolete, and been succeeded by later ones. If he had considered well all these circumstances, the similitude which he thinks he has discovered between the proverbs in their more modern form, and the Dutch sentences which he has constructed, would itself have raised in his mind a suspicion of the falseness of his theory. In addition to this, he ought to have known that these same proverbs which we find in our language occur also in the other tongues of the Teutonic stock, and in French—nay, even that they are found in Dutch itself, with the same sense and application as in English. We have a saying, "he was as busy as a hen

with one chicken." This Mr. Ker considers, in its English dress, to be nonsense, and accordingly interprets it in Dutch by "*Hij wasse als boose, als er her wijfe wan schick in;* q. e. *he became quite furious when it was proved to him that all which could come from what he had been so busy about must be a failure;*" apparently not aware that there was still preserved in Normandy a similar saying—"Etre plus embarrassé qu'une poule qui n'a qu'un poulin," (or, as Pluquet has it, "qu'un poussin.") Again, the protuberance which in a man marks externally the entrance of the windpipe is popularly termed "the Adam's apple," a term explained by a superstitious story. Mr. Ker explains the name "*De adems happel;* q. e. *that by which the breath is taken;*" deriving the English name from the Dutch by manner of travesty; but the name is by no means confined to our own country, for the French call the same protuberance "La pomme d'Adam," and they explain it by a similar story, how Eve swallowed the apple at once, but Adam, recollecting the prohibition to eat it just as it reached this part of his throat, could not swallow it any further, and it rested always there.

A history of English proverbs would, indeed, be a curious and interesting book; but it would be a work of labour, requiring extensive reading and deep research. The materials are plentiful; for, not to speak of the frequent allusions to them in all our old writers, we have, in printed books and manuscripts, collections of popular proverbs at different periods, from the twelfth century to the present day. A valuable collection of English proverbs of the sixteenth century is found in a rhyming treatise, entitled, '*A Dialogue, contayning in effect the number of al the Proverbs in the English tongue, compact in a matter*

concerning two mariages,' by John Heywood, which was first printed in a black letter quarto in 1547. Heywood always quotes those proverbs as *old* sayings: thus,

> "*Folke say of old*, the shoe will holde with the sole,"
> (*Part* 2, *chap.* v.)

and praises them exceedingly, as

> "Our common, plaine, pithie proverbes olde,
> Some sense of some of whiche beying bare and rude,
> Yet to fine and fruitfull effect they allude,
> And their sentences include so large a reache,
> That almost in all thinges good lessons they teache."
> (*Preface.*)

If we except a few of these proverbs, which contain allusions to stories popular at that time, and perhaps sung or told at every alehouse throughout the land, we find scarcely one in this collection which is not also current at the present day. But there are here often additional circumstances in the comparison or in the allusion, which help us onward in our search into their history. Mr. Ker quotes the proverb; "To leap out of the frying-pan into the fire;" but in Heywood there is a part of the proverb preserved which is now lost, and which tells us that the comparison in this proverb is between a man and a flounder:

> "From suspicion to knowlage of yll, for sothe,
> Coulde make ye dooe but as the flounder dothe—
> Leape out of the frying-pan into the fyre;
> And chaunge from yl peyn to wurs is worth smal hyre."

The contents of the manuscript of Trinity College, before alluded to, are very miscellaneous. Among much curious Latin poetry, we have riddles and conundrums (a species

of composition which seems to have been a great favourite with our forefathers) written in leonine verse: such as,

"Est avis in nemore nigro vestita colore,
Si caput abstulcris, res erit alba nimis."

The solution of which, as we are told in the margin, is *cornix*, a crow; which word being robbed of its head, or first syllable, becomes *nix*, or snow. Again:

"Est animal parvum, quod nunquam pascit in arvum,
Si convertatur, bene quadrupes inde ligatur:
Musca ligabit equum, si sit conversa retrorsum."

Musca, a fly, as the margin tells us, by placing the first syllable last becomes *camus*, a bridle. There are also epigrams, such as the following, which is curious, because it appears again, a little changed in the details, as the subject of a Norman-French fabliau, published, if we remember right, in the collection of Barbazan, and also afterwards, in one of the '*Canterbury Tales*' of Chaucer.

"*Versus de Mola piperis.*
Militis uxorem clamidis mercede subegit
Clericus, et piperis clam tulit inde molam.
Mane redit, referensque molam præsente marito,
Dixit, 'mantellum redde, reporto molam.'
'Redde,' maritus ait: respondit fœmina 'reddam:
Amplius ad nostram non molit ille molam.'"

The manuscript also contains a collection of vernacular proverbs, some alliterative and some in rhyme, translated into Latin leonines. Above each of the Latin lines a space is left for the insertion of the English, and sometimes French, originals in red ink; but, unfortunately, a few only have been so inserted. Thus we have the well-known saw,

"Veld haveð hege, and wude haveð heare."

(*The field has eyes, and the wood has ears.*)

Or, as it is in the Latin version,

"Campus habet lumen, et habet nemus auris acúmen."

Which proverb is again cited in a poem of the thirteenth century, "King Edward and the Shepherd:"

"The herd bade, 'let sech (*such*) wordis be,
Sum man myȝt here the,
The were bettur be still;
Wode has erys, felde has siȝt,
Were the forster (*forester*) here now right,
Thy wordis shuld like the ille.'"

So also,

"Tunge bregþ bon, þeȝh heo nabbe hire silf non."

(*The tongue breaks bone, though she herself has none.*)

Meaning, that by not properly governing our tongue, we are often the cause of broken bones. In the Latin:

"Ossa terat lingua, careat licet ossibus illa."

This proverb also occurs among the wise sayings of Alfred:

"For ofte tunke brekit bon,
And navid hire selwe non."

And again, in a song of the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century (MS. Sloane),

"Wykkyd tunge breket bon,
Thow the self (*same*) have non;
Of his frynd he maket his fon,
In every place qwer that he go."

Again, we have the proverb,

"Ho wle wel segge, he mot hine wel bi-þenche."

(*Who will speak to the purpose, must think well before he speaks.*)

"Qui bene vult fari, bene debet promeditari."

Many of our popular proverbs, and these often the "most burlesque and unmeaning", at first sight, alluded to familiar animals, such as dogs, and cats, and cows. So, among those which Mr. Ker has "over-set" into Dutch, we find,

"He is as proud as a dog with two tails." (p. 10, *new edit.*)

"He looked as melancholy as a gib-cat." (p. 13.)

"He is as much behind as a cow's tail." (p. 47.)

However, such proverbs as these are found among the oldest in our language. In the before-mentioned poem of the wise sayings of Alfred, we have two instances of them: as,

"For ofte mused þe catt
After þe moder."

And again:

"þe bicche bitit ille
þan he berke stille."

So, in the collection of proverbs of the twelfth century, from which we have already given a few specimens, we have—

"Nim hund to godsep anne staff in þire hond."
(*Take a dog for thy companion with a staff in thy hand.*)
"Quisquis fungetur cane compatre virga paretur."

"Hund and cat kissat, ne beoþ hi noþe bet i-frund."
(*The dog and cat kiss, they are none the better friends.*)
"Si catulo catus dat basia, non fit amatus."

"Ne bigge no man cat, bute he i-seo þe clǽres."
(*Let no man buy a cat without seeing the claws.*)
"Nullus emat catum, nisi viderit unguipedatum."

"Hund eet þat hen man spelat."
(*The dog eateth what the miser hoardeth up.*)
"Sæpe vorat gnarus canis id quod servat avarus."

"Wil ðe hund gnaȝh bon, i-fere neld he non."
(*While the dog gnaws the bone, companion will he have none.*)
"Dum canis os rodit, sociari pluribus odit."

"Cat lufat visch, ac he nele his feth wete."
(*The cat loves fish, yet he will not wet his feet.*)
"Catus amat piscem, sed non vult tangere flumen."

"Wel wot hure cat whas berd he likat."
(*Well knows our cat whose beard he licketh.*)
"Murilegus bene scit cujus barbam linguere suescit."

This last, like several of the others, is still preserved. In Heywood's book, before alluded to, we also find it quoted in almost the same words (part 2, chap. ix.):

"The cat knowth whose lips she likth well enough."

These few examples will show that, at least as early as the twelfth century, the popular proverbs were precisely similar to those of the present day; indeed, that a very large portion of them were the same, long before Mr. Ker's Low-Dutch would have had any chance of being understood. They show also that, in the alterations and modu-

lations which our language has undergone, its proverbs have varied in words, and not in sense. Indeed, Mr. Ker has been unfortunate in this point, for he has invariably taken the proverbs in their most modern form, never seeming to suspect that some few centuries ago their forms may have been very different. The proverb, "Needs must when the devil drives," becomes immediately with him, "*Nood's meest wen't evel te riif is; q. e.* necessity is the master where the evil is too exuberant." But even in "maister" Heywood's time the wording of the phrase was a little different, for thus he quotes it (part 2, chap. vii.):

> "He must nedes go whom the divle doth drive."

"To kick against the bricks," says Mr. Ker, is nothing more than "*Te kicken afgunst des bruiks; q. e.* to let out or betray dislike of general usage, custom." But the proverb, as he gives it, if not an erroneous quotation of the Scripture phrase, "To kick against the *pricks*," is merely a modern improvement of the older phrase, "To kick against the wall;" which is thus quoted by Heywood (part 2, chap. v.):

> "Foly it is to spowrne against a pricke,
> To strive against the streme, *to winche or kicke*
> *Against the hard wall.*"

Many of these proverbs and sayings of old times, which we cannot now understand, referred to stories and fables that are forgotten. To mention one or two out of a host, we have in Chaucer—

> "And eke thise olde widewes, God it wote,
> They *connen so moch craft on Wades bote.*"

A proverb founded upon a legendary history, which is now supposed to be lost. So in Heywood we have—

"Nay, backare, quod Mortimer to his sow;"

And,

"Then wolde ye looke over me with stomach swolne,
Like as the divell lookt over Lincolne."

Still there are many such sayings, and not a few in Mr. Ker's book, of whose origin a very satisfactory account may be given. He has certainly shown a want of respect to our great poet Chaucer, when he derived the saying, "A Canterbury tale," in the sense of a fable, from the Dutch "*Gaen-deur-op-eere-te-heel; q. e.* to go on (get through) by the help alone of reiterated appeals to honour." When he derived "Hobson's choice" from "*Op soen's gheeijsch*; at the command of a sacrifice," he should not have passed over the other half of the proverb, "this or none," or have forgotten the story of old Hobson of Cambridge, who let out his horses in rotation. "To bell the cat," he says, is "*Woe wel beul, dije guit; q. e.* and though there is a hangman, yet you see robbing still goes on." Yet in a book nearly as old as the middle of the fourteenth century (which was formerly exceedingly popular, and now deserves to be read and well studied—the *Visions of Piers Plowman*), we find the fable on which this proverb was founded; how the rats and mice held a council, to consider the means of escaping from the claws of their tormentor, the cat; how they determined to put a bell round her neck, that might give warning of her approach; and how at last the question was, Who should undertake to put on the bell?

Before we leave the subject we will give one or two examples of the manner in which our proverbs may be traced through the whole family of the Teutonic stock of languages. We have a common proverb, "Strike when the iron is hot," which occurs in our own language in the time of Heywood, who says "whan thyren is hote, strike;" and, again, as far back as the time of Chaucer—

> "Pandarus, whiche that stode her faste by,
> Felt iron hotte, and he began to smite."
> (*Troil. and Cres.* 21,275.)

It occurs in French—thus in Rabelais, "But Pantagruel . . said, my masters, we must now strike the iron whilst it is hot;" among the French proverbs of the Corpus College manuscript, "L'en deyt battre le fer tanqe soit chaud;" and, again, in the proverbs of the count of Bretagne, already mentioned. We have it, also, in Germany—in the Latin Reinhard (*Rein. Vulp. l.* 402)—

> "Tundatur ferrum dum novus ignis inest,"

and in the *Cöln. Chronicle* (*l.* 4280)—

> "Die guede smede haint eynen seden,
> Als dat yseren heis is so willent sijs smeden."

And it occurs in Dutch—"Smet het îzer ter wil het hêt is." (*Grüt.* 119. *Prov. Belg.*)

We have another saying, "It is a dirty bird that fouleth its own nest," which occurs again in English as early, probably, as the twelfth century, in the poem of "The Owl and the Nightingale"—

"Thar-bi men segget a vorbisne,
Dahet habbe that ilke best
That fuleth his owe nest." (*l.* 28.) *

We find it in German, "Es ist ein böser vogel der in sein aigen nest hofiert" (*Grüt.* 32. *Prov. Alem.*); and, again, in the north: "Ericus," observes Saxo Grammaticus, "se ad astandum fratri natura pertrahi dixit, *probrosum* referens *alitem, qui proprium polluat nidum;*" on which Stephanus (*Not. uber. in Saxon. Gram.*) observes, "Proverbium est antiquum, quod etiamnum Islandis in usu, *Sa er fuglenn westur, sem i sialffs siins hreidur drutur.*"

Another very curious English proverb, quoted by Ray, "Those that eat cherries with great persons shall have their eyes sprinted out with the stones," occurs also in German—"Mit grossen herrn ist nit gut kirschen essen, si schiessen gern mit stainen zu, und werffen die stiel einem an kopff. (*Grüter* 59. *Prov. Aleman.*) The same proverb is thus quoted in the German Reinhard—

"Uig haint id etzelige wale geweten:
Mit heren ist quait kirsen eten.
Si willent, dat ir geselle grife
Alzît de harde, in de si de rife."
(*Grimm. Reinh. F.* p. 383.)

The history of our popular proverbs is, undoubtedly, a most curious and interesting subject; and we trust that ere long some person who is qualified for the task will give it that attention which it deserves. Much has been done for

* *Thar-bi*, concerning which—*segget*, say—*vorbisne*, proverb—*dahet habbe*, bad luck have—*best*, beast—*fuleth*, fouleth—*owe*, own.

the subject in Germany, and several large collections of proverbs have been published. We may point out as one of the most recent that entitled *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Deutschen,* by Dr. Wilhelm Körte, Leipzig, 1837. In France a very valuable and extensive collection has been published by M. Le Roux de Lincy, under the title of *Le Livre des Proverbes Français,* 2 vols. Paris, 1842.

ESSAY V.

ON THE ANGLO-LATIN POETS OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

IN fixing a period for the general revival of learning, we are apt to forget or neglect what preceded it. Many talk, and not a few write, of dark ages,—of ages which, as they think, produced nothing worth calling a literature, while, when we examine their productions, in as yet their only repository—the contemporary manuscripts that are preserved in our public, and in some of our private, libraries—we discover that those very ages were brilliant eras in the history of science and letters. Few who read in our own native history the troublous reigns of the twelfth century, are aware that in England it was an age of literature, that it produced innumerable works on theology and on science; history, and poetry, and romance; and many a reader of modern Latin verse will be startled when we tell him that it produced Englishmen who in writing that language approached in some degree the purer models of the classic age.

As the Christian faith was introduced among the western nations of Europe, the Latin tongue became every where the language of theology, and consequently, since the clergy were for a time the great cultivators of science and letters, the language of the learned. It is true that they studied this

language generally in barbarous models—in the works of the theologians and philosophers of a late period, which were brought from Italy by the missionaries, or by the richer and more pious of the converts who had been induced by their zeal to visit the seat of the Romish pontiff, a journey very often undertaken by our Saxon forefathers. Yet, along with such books, some of the best of the classic writers were not unfrequently imported, and it is no uncommon thing to find, among our collections of manuscripts, copies of even such writers as Horace, and Virgil, and Plautus, in early Saxon hand-writing. To the influence of such works, without doubt, we must attribute the comparative degree of excellence possessed by some of the earlier Anglo-Saxon writers of Latin.

It is a curious circumstance, that on every side, as the northern and Teutonic colonies obtained firm and quiet settlements, a high taste for civilization and literature immediately developed itself amongst them. The extensive cultivation of literature among the Anglo-Saxons is proved by the numerous remains in the vernacular tongue which, after the shocks of so many centuries, are still preserved. Of any purely vernacular literature which the Normans may have once possessed, we know nothing, because they had long adopted the corrupt form of the Latin, which was peculiar to them as Anglo-Normans, at the date of the earliest specimens of their literature. It is certain that, at the period when William entered England, Normandy reckoned among its clergy a host of elegant and profound scholars. That the works of the ancients were very commonly read during the two following centuries, the multitude of subjects which were transferred from them to the vernacular middle-age romance leaves

us no room to doubt.* That those romances were but barbarous travesties of the original stories—that the writers of them had evidently no ideas of other feelings or manners than those of their own age—proves nothing, because, when the learned clergy, who were those who studied the Latin authors, treated in Latin verse the same subjects, they show an extensive and just knowledge of the mythologies and manners of ancient Greece and Rome. We must not forget that the Trojan war of our own Joseph of Exeter was first printed as a classic poem.

The school of Anglo-Latin poets who wrote in the twelfth century was certainly founded by the Norman clergy, who had been introduced by the Conqueror to the English sees and abbeys. Leland mentions much elegant poetry which was written during his reign, and some of that of Godfrey, prior of Winchester, who died in 1107, is still preserved in manuscripts at Oxford, and in the British Museum. Godfrey was peculiarly distinguished for his

* In the very curious Romance of Flamenca, of the thirteenth century, analysed by Raynouard in the thirteenth volume of the "Notices des Manuscrits," is a long and interesting list of the subjects of the romances of the Trouvères. Of forty-five such romances, four are formed on Scriptural subjects; twenty-one are pure middle-age productions, that is, they comprise Chansons de Geste, romances of the Round Table, more recent histories, &c.; and no less than twenty are subjects taken from the mythologies of Greece and Rome. Among these latter were the stories of the Odyssey, the Iliad, and the Æneid—

"L'autre contava d'Ulixes,
L'autre d'Hector e d'Achilles;
L'autre contava d'Eneas
E de Dido, com si remas
Per lui dolenta e mesquina."

epigrams; and the following, which is given by Warton from the Oxford manuscript, possesses the terseness and elegance of Martial, whose works its author had evidently studied with success.

"Pauca Titus pretiosa dabat, sed vilia plura:
Ut meliora habeam, pauca det, oro, Titus."

Which we may venture to imitate thus:

"Simon showers worthless gifts on all his friends,
Few precious favours he bestows, 't is true:
In faith, whene'er his gifts to me he sends,
Believe me, John, I hope he'll send me *few*."

Camden, in his *Remains*, has printed several of Godfrey's epigrams. In the following the idea is gracefully expressed—Drusus, as it appears, had devoured meat which his olfactory nerves should have taught him to reject—

"Druse, comedisti quem misit Silvius hircum,
Vel tibi non nasus, vel tibi nasus olet."

Which may thus be turned into the vulgar tongue—

"Tom, hast thou eaten Jenkin's meat? methinketh
Thou'st lost thy nose, or else in sooth *it* stinketh."

An abbot who, as Camden observes, "would defend his monks from others, but worry them himself," had provoked the anger of the epigrammatist—the reproof is neatly conceived—

"Tollit ovem de fauce lupi persæpe molossus,
Ereptamque lupo ventre recondit ovem:
Tu quoque, Scæva, tuos prædone tueris ab omni,
Unus prædo tamen perdis ubique tuos."

Godfrey was by no means the only epigrammatist of his time, though, as far as we can judge by what remains, he excelled all his contemporaries in grace and elegance, and his style merits the eulogy which Leland has bestowed upon it for its sweetness—"familiari illo et dulci stylo." We sometimes find the subject of a French fabliau condensed into the form of a Latin epigram, and one example has been given in a former essay (p. 167), and to this we now add another. A fabliau in the collection first published by Barbazan tells us how, whilst a merchant was trafficking in a distant land, his spouse at home had increased her family by one more than she ought lawfully to have done. The merchant, on his return, was naturally enough surprised at the phenomenon—she however was quick at finding an excuse—it was the age of miracles, and she declared that one day a flake of snow having fallen into her mouth, like the shower of gold which Jupiter rained upon Danaë, it had fructified into the boy she then bore in her arms. The merchant seemed satisfied, the lad grew bigger, the father took him with him on one of his voyages, sold him into slavery, and when, on his return home, the anxious mother expressed her astonishment at the absence of her child, she was informed that the boy, who had originated from snow, had melted under the rays of a warmer sun into water. The story is thus told, though without either elegance or skill, by a poet of the reign of John, Geoffrey de Vinsauf.

"Rebus in augendis longe remorante marito,
Uxor mœcha parit puerum; post multa reverso,
De nive conceptum fingit: fraus mutua, caute
Sustulit, asportat, vendit, matrique reportans
Ridiculum simile, liquefactum sole refingit."

The twelfth century was an age of licentiousness, of violence, and of oppression, equally among the clergy and among the laity—but, as it afforded objects of satire, it also produced those who were clever enough and honest enough to satirize them. One of the most remarkable satires of the twelfth century was written by Nigellus Wireker, who was precentor of the cathedral church of Canterbury, and flourished during the reigns of the second Henry and his successor Richard. The poem to which we allude is entitled *Speculum Stultorum,* and many copies are preserved—three, which we have examined, are in the British Museum (MSS. Harl. No. 2422, Cotton, Titus A. xx. and Arund. No. 23.) It has been more than once printed, but from very imperfect copies, and most of the editions are rare. The hero of the poem is a jack-ass, who goes by the name of Burnellus, and who is sent out into the world to seek his fortune. One of his earlier adventures is his arrival at Salerno, where he is cheated by a London merchant. He afterwards goes to Paris, and Nigellus takes this opportunity of laughing at the jovial and licentious habits of his countrymen, which were conspicuous even amongst the scholars at the Parisian university.

"Burnellusque sibi minuit crinesque totondit,
Induit et tunica se meliore sua.
Pexus et ablutus, tandem progressus in urbem,
Intrat in ecclesiam, vota precesque facit.
Inde scholas adiens, secum deliberat, utrum
Expediant potius illa vel ista sibi,
Et quia subtiles sensu considerat Anglos,
Pluribus ex causis se sociavit eis.
Moribus egregii, verbo vultuque venusti,
Ingenio pollent, consilioque vigent:

Dona pluunt populis, et detestantur avaros:
Fercula multiplicant, et sine lege bibunt
Wessail et *Dringail*, nec non persona secunda,
Hæc tria sunt vitia quæ comitantur eos;
His tribus exceptis, nihil est quod in his reprehendas,
Hæc tria si tollas, cætera cuncta placent."

Which we may thus turn into jingling rhymes.—

"And when arrived, and safely hived in famous town of Paris,
In barber's shop, his hair to crop, a full half-hour he tarries:
Thence forth he goes in Sunday clothes, his head with unguent reeking,
Midst gallants rare, that gather there, a pleasant harbour seeking.
And first in search of parish church his anxious eyes directed,
Where prayers being said, and service read, and offerings meet accepted,
Through street and lane in haste again his weary footsteps turning,
On holier ground the schools he found, the ancient seat of learning.
There sage Burnell considered well, with due deliberation,
What faculty his choice should be, what sect, or class, or nation:
But chiefly then the Englishmen were praised for art and cunning,
For pregnant parts, and generous hearts, all mean behaviour shunning.
Much he approved the rule they loved, whose prudent care had striven
To cheer with wine the discipline that drier souls had given.
Three sins alone these gallants own—though these are black and heinous—
They seek relief in good roast beef from Scotus and Aquinas;
With merry souls, they drain their bowls; and then when each is mellow,
With lighter head he seeks his bed, to play with his bed-fellow.
And pity 'tis they sin in these, for sages wise declare to us,
From sins but three had they been free, their lives had been more virtuous."

This sarcasm upon the three trespasses of the English student—three of the most crying sins of the monkish "penitentiaries"—reminds us of the wit which has rendered celebrated the Madam Blaize of Goldsmith, and which has again, as we see in the newspapers, been perpetrated, though unwittingly, by one of "Warren's blacking" poets—a batch of poets who, by the same token, have, like all mundane things, degenerated. In the present instance our poet is describing the solitude of the arctic regions, and he assures us with much *naïveté* that

> "Solemn and still, dull silence reigned around,
> Unless 'twas interrupted by some sound—"

an idea which he might have expressed in the simplicity of prose, by saying that all was very quiet except when there was a noise.

John de Hauteville, a satirist of the end of this century, in a poem whose hero, named Architrenius, bears some analogy to the Burnell of Nigellus Wireker, has given us a description of the jovialities of an English drinking party of the twelfth century. In the third book of the Architrenius, he introduces to us his countrymen emulating each other in their drinking with as much zeal as Ajax and Ulysses contended for the armour of Achilles—

> "Consedere duces, et, Bacchi stante corona,
> Surgit ad os pateræ dominus septemplicis Ajax
> Anglicus, et calice similis contendit Ulixes."

It is quite unnecessary to point out the parody. The feats of the two leaders are followed by a shout, and then comes a general drinking bout.

"Ergo vagante scypho distincto gutture—*Wesheil!*—
Ingeminant—*Wesheil!*—labor est plus perdere vini
Quam sitis, exhaurire merum studiosius ardent
Quam sedare sitim, commendativa Lyæi
Est sitis, et candens calices venire palatum
Imperiosa jubet, ad Bacchi munera dextras
Blandius invitat."

Which in our manner we will translate,

"*Weshail!* they shout—the jovial rout—as round the bumper passes;
Nor care they take their thirst to slake, so long as there's wine in their glasses.
And well I trow there's nothing below the moon, so happy and glorious,
As a *thirsty* soul set beside his bowl, midst a troop of lads uproarious."

The Saxon exclamation *weshæil, i. e.* mayst thou be in health, is the origin of the wassail-bowl of the north of England, and is famous in English fabulous history as being the expression of the beautiful Rowena, when she administered the cup to king Vortigern, and made way for the downfall of the British dynasty before that of our own ancestors, the Saxons—"Wæs hëil, hlaford cyning!"—health to thee, my lord king.*

* The most curious list of the drinking words of the English of the twelfth century, is given by Wace in the Roman de Rou, where he thus describes the drinking-bout in the English camp during the night which preceded the battle of Hastings—

"Tote nuit mangierent e burent,
Unkes la nuit el lit ne jurent.
Mult les véissiez demener,
Treper e sailler e chanter:
Lublie crient, e *weissel*,
E *laticome*, e *drincheheil*,
Drinc hindrewart, e *drintome*,
Drinc helf, e *drinctome*."

Camden and others have been followed by Warton in calling the author of the *Architrenius*, John Hanville—the Latinized name, Johannes de Alvilla, as it is given in the early manuscript which we have before us, shows that it should be Hauville, or Hauteville more properly, and a later note in the same manuscript tells us that he was also called John of Higham, of which name the other two are, perhaps, but translations. His Latin is infinitely purer than that of Wireker, but the style he aims at is gaudy and meretricious, though he often rises above mediocrity. It would be difficult to find among the writings of any of his contemporaries as many lines so elegant and so unaffected as the following passage from his introductory book, wherein he invokes the aid of his muse to the undertaking—

> "Tu Cyrrhæ latices nostræ, Deus, implue menti,
> Eloquii rorem siccis infunde labellis,
> Distillaque favos, quos nec dum Tagus arenis
> Palleat, aut sitiat admotis Tantalus undis,
> Horreat insipidos ætas, vel livor amaros.
> Dirige quod timida præsumpsit dextera, dextram
> Audacem pavidamque juva. Tu mentis habenas
> Fervoremque rege; quicquid dictaverit ori
> Spiritus aridior, oleum suffunde favoris."

But to return to our worthy ass Burnell.—After he had passed his allotted time among the jovialities of the English scholars at Paris, he began seriously to repent of his follies, and resolved to become pious. Here the poet has a noble opportunity of satirizing the various orders of monks. It is a knotty point, by no means easy of solution in the mind of our hero, which of these orders he shall choose, and he descants somewhat fully on the advantages of each. Neither Templars, Hospitallers, nor

Black Monks suit his taste—the latter in particular were by far too much given to singing; and a little reflection brings to his mind his own true character, and the melancholy fact that his voice was not over good. To the White Monks he had a still greater objection, for they went without breeches. Similar defects were found in the other orders,—those of Grandmont, the Carthusians, the Black Canons, the Monstratensians, and the Secular Canons. The latter he owns were a jolly set; but they were *too* lax in their discipline, for he assures us they

"Observe in full the good old rule, that man must needs live double,
And rather than he *sans* mate should be, they'd let him have a couple.
This world of ours—its fading flowers—like garden-plot they cherish,
With liquors quaft they water it oft, for fear the flowers should perish."

Or, as it stands in the original, where its author has mixed leonines with his elegiacs:

"Lex vetus ut suasit ne quilibet absque sua sit,
Et quod quisque suas possit habere duas.
Hi sunt qui mundum cum flore cadente tenentes,
Ne cito marcescat sæpe rigare student."

Finally, neither the rules and manners of the regular nuns nor of those of the new order of Sempringham were agreeable to his taste. Of the former, indeed, he gives a very unfavorable account.

"All short their hair the sisters wear, as strictest rule provideth,
Nor ever lack wide veil of black that every feature hideth,
Their dainty skin concealed within dark robe of folds capacious.
If true I'm told, the rule they hold hath judged, with care sagacious,
That tight'ned zone nor pantaloon their gentle limbs shall fetter—
And still, they say, the dames obey its precepts to the letter.

A tranquil life, devoid of strife, this peaceful order leadeth,
Unless, I ween, some cause be seen, or place that striving breedeth:
And barrenness is not their vice, so long as youth endureth,
Though maidenly their converse be, as downcast mien assureth."

Or, as it is in the original,—

"Omnibus auretenus licet his nutrire capillos,
Sed non ulterius, regula namque vetat:
Utuntur niveis agni de corpore sumptis
Pellibus intonsis, pallia nigra gerunt.
Hæ caput abscondunt omnes sub tegmine nigro,
Sub tunicis nigris candida membra latent.
Cingula nulla ferunt, sed nec femoralibus uti
Consuedo fuit, nescio si modo sit.
Nunquam rixantur, nisi cum locus exigit aut res,
Sed neque percutiunt, sit nisi causa gravis.
Harum sunt quædam steriles, quædam parturientes;
Virgineoque tamen nomine cuncta tegunt;
Quæ pastoralis baculi dotatur honore,
Illa quidem melius fertiliusque paret.
Vix etiam quævis sterilis reperitur in illis,
Donec eis ætas talia posse negat."*

* The following unpublished epigram of this period seems to cast a general reflection upon the loose manners of the nuns. Perhaps the rigid virtue of the *clercs*, which it seems to presume, existed only in the mind of its writer, who may have been one of that order:—

"*Versus de clerico et monacha.*

[*Monacha.*] Cum sit par nobis genus, ætas, forma duobus,
Uret et igne pari pectora nostra Venus.
Me tibi teque mihi genus, ætas, et decor æquant,
Cur non ergo sumus sic in amore pares?

Clericus. ¶ Non mihi veste places: aliis nigra vestis ametur;
Quæ nigra sunt fugio, candida semper amo.

Monacha. ¶ Sum sub veste nigra, niveam tamen aspice carnem;
Si vestem fugias, candida crura pete.

Burnell, thus dissatisfied with all the different orders of monks, resolves to form a sect for himself, and the satire is wound up in describing an imaginary order, in which are brought together all the vices of the others, an idea which was often imitated by satirists of later times.

Whatever be the defects of Wireker's style, he was a bold and honest satirist, and feared not to point out openly the vices of his time, to his friend the chancellor, William bishop of Ely. Among the Cottonian manuscripts, Cleopatra B. III, we have two pieces by our author, both addressed to the bishop of Ely: one of them in Latin elegiacs, satirizing the manners of the courtiers; the other in prose, *contra curiales et officiales clericos.*

Contemporary monastic historians are loud in their declamations against the pride and presumption of this bishop, whose character appears to have been designedly blackened on account of his hostility to the monkish orders. Descended from amongst the lowest order of the people, as these writers tell us, his father having in his native district of Beauvais in Picardy driven the plough, a serf to the lords of the soil, he had raised himself by his intrigues to the episcopal dignity, and he was appointed by the first Richard,

Clericus. ¶ Nupsisti Christo quem non offendere fas est;
Hoc velum sponsam te probat esse Dei.
Monacha. ¶ Deponam velum, deponam cætera cuncta,
Ibit et in lectum nuda puella tuum.
Clericus. ¶ Si velo careas, tamen altera non potes esse,
Et mea culpa gravis non foret inde minus.
Monacha. ¶ Culpa quidem, sed culpa levis; tamen ista fatemur:
Hoc fore peccatum, sed veniale tamen.
Clericus. ¶ Uxorem violare viri grave crimen habetur:
Est gravius sponsam me violare Dei."

MS. Cotton. Cleop. B. ix, fol. 13, r°.

on his departure for the East, chancellor and regent of England during his absence. In addition to his supreme power in civil affairs, he had obtained from the pope the authority of legate, and he alternately supported his tyranny in his one capacity by his authority in the other. The clergy who dared to express their dissatisfaction at his oppression of their orders were put down by the strong hand of secular power, while those of the laity who murmured against his secular tyranny were placed immediately under the ban of the church. The king had delivered into his hands what William of Newbury calls *the bones* of his kingdom, the royal fortresses, with which he so held the nobles in awe, that none except John, the king's brother and heir-apparent, dared for a moment to dispute his orders. Their sons are described as serving him in his palace, vieing with each other in submissive humility, and not even daring to look on their lordly master without his express command, under pain of stripes; and his cousins and nieces, born in hovels, were sought in marriage by earls and barons. When he appeared in public he was seldom attended by less than a thousand retainers; seizing every occasion of showing his contempt for Englishmen, he was surrounded by bands of greedy foreign mercenaries—Frenchmen and Flemings; and so eager was he of popular fame, that he imported from France poets and jongleurs, whom he employed in writing songs in his praise, and in singing them about the streets and at festivals.* The writer who gives us this piece of infor-

* "Hic ad augmentum et famam nominis sui, mendicata carmina et rithmos adulatorios comparabat, de regno Francorum cantatores et joculatores allexerat, ut de eo canerent in plateis, et jam dicebatur ubique quod non erat talis in orbe." (*MS. Arund.* No. 14.)

mation, Hugh de Nonant, (a violent enemy of the bishop,) when he would picture to us the avarice of the chancellor and his satellites, declares that their extortions had left neither a girdle to a man, nor a necklace to a woman; not a ring to a noble, and nothing of value even to a Jew. (*Nec viro bălteum nec fœminæ monile remanserat, nec annulus nobili, nec quodlibet preciosum alicui etiam Judæo.*)

Such was the chancellor, if we believe the monkish writers. The chronicles of those times exult over the degradations which fell upon him. The only opponent to his secular usurpations whom he feared was John: he anticipated, however, in his clerical capacity, the opposition of the newly elected archbishop of York, who was also the king's brother, and who had not yet arrived from the continent to take possession of his see, and he resolved to crush him before that opposition should become serious. As soon as he learnt that the new archbishop was on his way to England, he sent a party of his mercenaries to Dover, who laid wait for him, plundered and dispersed his attendants, and tore the prelate from the altar to carry him to a prison. So unprecedented an outrage provoked the indignation of the nobles; a consultation was held, at which were present John, the archbishops of York (who had now been liberated in the hope of averting the storm) and Rouen (who had been sent by the king from Sicily to be associated with the bishop of Ely in the regency), and the bishops of London, Bath, Winchester, Norwich, Rochester, Lincoln, Hereford, St. David's, and Coventry, where it was resolved to depose the tyrant. The chancellor, who had at first prepared to try his strength with his opponents, on their approach sought refuge in the Tower. Hampered there by the

number of his own retainers, crowded into so small compass, he was soon obliged to capitulate; and, after the delivery of all the royal castles and hostages for himself, he was allowed to retire to Dover, where he sought shelter with his brother-in-law, the governor of the castle. After having remained here some days, he resolved to fly into France; and fearing to be arrested in his attempt, he disguised himself in the garb of a woman. "Proh pudor!" exclaims the writer whom we have already quoted from the Arundel manuscript, who has written the history of his fall, and who delights in designating him by the grammatical sign of the epicene gender, *ille vel illa*—"proh pudor! vir factus est fœmina, cancellarius cancellaria, sacerdos meretrix, episcopus scurra." Clothed in a long hyacinth-coloured gown, with a cape of the same colour, and a veil thrown over his head, carrying in his left hand, in place of a maniple, a piece of linen, as though he would offer it for sale; and in his right a yard measure instead of the pastoral staff; he descended from the castle to the shore, where he seated himself upon a piece of rock on the beach, having placed a few of his most faithful attendants at a short distance to keep watch. He had not been there long before a fisherman, who, half-naked, had just drawn his nets from the sea, and spread them out to dry in the sun, approached, and mistaking the chancellor for a strumpet, placed his left arm around his neck, and, with the other was proceeding to touch him much more rudely, when he discovered that beneath his gown he bore the dress of a man. The astonished fisherman was silenced by the interference of some of the bishop's attendants, and the latter continued to expect anxiously the arrival of a vessel which might bear him away, when a woman of the place coming down

to the water-side, was led by curiosity to examine the linen which he held in his hand, and demanded the price at which he would sell it. The chancellor, entirely ignorant of the English tongue, was silent. The woman became more urgent for a reply, and, being joined by another woman, their curiosity was raised to such a degree, that they seized his veil, lifted it from his head, and discovered beneath it the dark face of a man. The two women possessed less discretion than the fisherman; a crowd was quickly brought together, who, in spite of the repeated attempts of his attendants to rescue him, dragged the chancellor ignominiously from the beach through the town, and finally threw him into a dark cellar. He was thence carried before the magistrates, was recognized and imprisoned, and, only at the intercession of the English bishops, was at last allowed to seek refuge in exile.

Although at this period it was the fashion to satirize and ridicule the monks, yet there were not wanting those who, either having formed an imaginary standard of the excellence of their profession, or perhaps forming their idea of the monkish life on the examples of the few, were emulous of writing in their praise. The classic and accomplished Neckam, who died abbot of Cirencester in 1217, in his poem in praise of the monastic life, gives us his definition of the character of a monk in these elegant lines:—

"Non tonsura facit monachum, nec horrida vestis,
Sed virtus animi, perpetuusque rigor:
Mens humilis, mundi contemptus, vita pudica,
Sanctaque sobrietas, hæc faciunt monachum."

Neckam seems to have ever dwelt with pleasure on the

remembrance of the happiness of his earlier days, which he had spent in monastic retirement among the monks of St. Albans. A passage quoted by Leland from his poem on the praise of Divine Wisdom, after speaking of the "tuta quies" which that monastery afforded, adds:—

"Hic locus ætatis nostræ primordia novit,
Annos felices lætitiæque dies.
Hic locus ingenuis pueriles imbuit annos
Artibus, et nostræ laudis origo fuit.
Hic locus insignes magnosque creavit alumnos,
Felix eximio martyre, gente, situ.
Militat hic Christo, noctuque dieque labori
Indulget sancto, religiosa cohors."

The poems of Alexander Neckam are valuable for their allusions to contemporary usages. In the above-mentioned poem on the Monastic Life, of which a copy is preserved among the Royal MSS. (8 A. XXI) he indulges in satire against the corrupt manners of the laity. He is particularly zealous in declaiming against the coquetry of his countrywomen, and he gives us some curious information on the toilet of a dame of the twelfth century. He blames the ladies for painting their faces, for thinning their eyebrows, for unnaturally pressing their breasts into a small compass, for dyeing their black hair to render it yellow:—

"Hæc quoque diversis sua sordibus inficit ora;
Sed quare melior quæritur arte color?
Arte supercilium rarescit, rursus et arte
In minimum mammas colligit ipsa suas;
Arte quidem videas nigros flavescere crines;
Nititur ipsa suo membra movere loco.
Sic fragili pingit totas in corpore partes,
Ut quicquid nota est displicuisse putes."

Further on he gives us a strong picture of the luxurious life of a baron of the same period—of his state and magnificence. Though the whole passage is somewhat long, we think that its curiosity will excuse our giving a part of it. Our readers will see allusions to several elegancies of life which they would hardly expect to have found in the twelfth century.

"Ille voluptatum varia dulcedine gaudet,
Et desideriis servit ubique suis;
Suntque summa putat meretrix, cocus, histrio; nullum
His præfert, aut par æstimat esse bonum.
Quicquid et ad victum mare nutrit vel tenet aer,
Quæret habetque viri luxuriosa fames;
Et modico ventri vastus vix sufficit orbis.
Ergo ministrorum vocibus aula fremit,
Argentoque dapes ponuntur, Bacchus in auro,
Et gemma infusum plurima nectar habet.
Vestibus et facie longus nitet ordo clientum,
Ad domini nutum turba parata levis.
Sexus uterque canit, resonant citharæque liræque,
Et reddunt illic organa dulce melos.
Tandem epulis largis et pleno ventre beatus,
Cum scortis porcus gaudia noctis habet;
O præclari viri virtus! O vita beata!
Deliciis pastus cum meretrice cubat.
Quid vestes referam, lectos, et divitis ædes?
Nescit habere modum prodiga luxuries.
Hinc per longa meant nitidi canalia fontes,
Herba columnarum marmore clausa viret;
Fructiferumque genus tot arborum educat ortus,
Mixtaque sanguineis alba ligustra rosis;
Nec violæ desunt: sed et illis floris et herbæ
Et quicquid specie et quicquid odore viget.
Nunc phaleratorum tergo vectatur equorum,
Nunc saturum lento remige cymba vehit,

Nunc illum effeminat sub papilionibus,* et nunc
Grata sub arboreis quæritur umbra comis.
Nunc delectatur turbis et plausibus urbis,
Et modo privatus degere rure cupit."

That the satirists did not overpaint the luxurious and effeminate manners of the higher ranks during the latter part of the twelfth century is sufficiently proved by the evidence of contemporary historians. John of Salisbury laments much over the profligate lives of the barons of his days. While the knights, he says, were passing their times in licentiousness, while they were haunting the houses of the nobles to eat and drink at their tables, their only military exploits were those which they created there in their boasting; the wild Welshman left his mountains, constantly invaded the Marches, and made tributary the barons who dwelt on the borders. "Oh!" cries he, "that our ladies were like those of the ancient Persians, that they would reproach the cowardice of their husbands and children as they did, and would drive them to the field, that the invaders might be chased from our borders!"

John of Salisbury laments in his Polycraticon the evils of Stephen's days, which he had just passed, when, to use the strong language of the Saxon annalist of the time, "every rich man made his castles, and held them against the king, and the land was filled with castles. Grievously they oppressed the miserable people of the land with their castle-works. When the castles were made, they filled them with devils and evil men; and then they seized every one who was supposed to have any property—man and woman—both by night and by day, and put them in prison

* Pavilions, or tents.

for their gold and silver, and punished them with such inexpressible torments as none of the martyrs ever suffered. They hung them by the feet, and smoked them with foul smoke; and they hung them by the thumbs, or by the head, and hung fire to their feet. They put knotted cords about their heads, and twisted them till they pierced to the brains. They put some in dungeons, where were adders, and snakes, and toads, and so tormented them. Others they placed in a *crucet-house,* that is, in a chest which was short and narrow and shallow, and they put in sharp stones, and pressed people in them till all their limbs were broken. In many of the castles were things very horrible and hateful—these were '*sachenteges,*' that were as much as two or three men could lift; and they were so contrived that the man was fastened to a beam, with sharp iron about his throat or neck, that he could neither sit, nor lie down, nor sleep, but was compelled always to support that weight. Many they tormented with hunger: I cannot tell all the sufferings and all the torments which the wretched people bore during the nineteen years of Stephen's reign. They laid tributes upon the towns, and when the wretched people had no more to give, they ravaged and burnt all the towns, so that you might go a long day's journey and not find a man dwelling in a town, or the land tilled. Then was corn and flesh and cheese and butter dear." (*Chron. Sax.* A. D. 1137.)

An isolated anecdote often pictures to us the manners and feelings of the time more vividly than the more general, and consequently, in such cases, less definite descriptions of the chronicler. Such an anecdote is given in the curious manuscript Life and Miracles of St. Oswin, (MS. Cotton, Jul. A. X. fol. 26). Whilst Germanus was

prior of Tynemouth, that is, in the reign of Stephen, the fisherman of the monastery was a boy named Leofric. Once, at the time of the herring-fishery, he had gone with the fishing-boat to Scarborough. Suddenly came Ranulf, the famous earl of Chester, with his men, and, after ravaging the town, carried away captive many of the people he found there, and among the rest the fisherman Leofric. They were all carried in chains to Malton on the eve of St. Simon and Jude. On their arrival the earl and his men immediately placed themselves at table, and prepared for a plentiful repast. Leofric and his companions, more pious than their persecutors, refused to eat meat on the eve of a fast-day. Their persecutor, enraged at their obstinacy, ordered fish to be placed before them. "Eat, wretches," said he, "and fill yourselves, for I swear by heaven and all the gods therein, that none of you shall eat again until the full sum of his ransom has been payed." And they had no sooner finished than he ordered them all to be stripped, gave their clothes to the guard, and caused them to be bound naked to a stake. Thus they were kept fasting for a week, and were made to suffer an infinity of torments. Sometimes they were hung up by the hands to the rafter: then they were let down and cruelly beaten with rods, and at last each again bound to his stake. Amidst his torments, Leofric continued to invoke incessantly the aid of his patron saint, "Saint Oswin, help me!" The tyrant was warming himself at the fire, for it was severe weather: tired of hearing the repetition of the name of St. Oswin, he suddenly turned about, threw a stick which he had in his hand at Leofric, and ordered him to be silent. "Wretch!" said he, "what is it that thou cryest? and why dost thou tease us with the name of this Oswin?

Who is it whom thou askest to liberate thee from me without the intervention of money? Hold thy tongue, and let us have no more of thy chattering, and, above all, have a care that thou dost not disturb our rest this night by thy vain clamours." The night following, however, Leofric contrived to loose himself from his bonds, and, seizing the stick which had been thrown at him, and taking the cloak of the stableboy, who happened to be sleeping at the door, to cover his nakedness,* he escaped from the hands of his tormentors, and made all haste to reach the monastery of Tynemouth, where he declared to the brethren that the saint had appeared to him in his sleep, and had loosened him from his bonds. The monks offered due thanks to their patron, and entered the story in the book of his miracles.

By far the best Latin poet of the twelfth century was Joseph of Exeter (Josephus Iscanus) whom Leland characterises as "tam splendidum Britanniæ sidus," and whose long and elegant epic on the Trojan war was first printed as a work of Cornelius Nepos. His patron was Baldwin, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the zealous advocate of

* The writer of this book, who appears to have been prior or abbot of St. Albans, on which Tynemouth was dependent, thought it necessary to make an apology for this very excusable theft. "Evigilans itaque Leouuricus, et de visione lætior affectus, manus suas solutis vinculis liberas invenit. . . . . Et pedes a cippo facillime extrahens, baculum in se jactum manu sumpsit, et ad quoddam ostium ex cujus transverso puer quidem equorum custos jacebet pervenit, a cujus ostio seram leviter excussit. *Sed quia nudus erat, et frigoris asperitas abire nudum non permisit, non amor rapinæ, sed necessitas instantis fugæ quæ a nudo exequi non potuit, dormienti puero cucullam nauticam eripuit*, qua Leouuricus indutus iter arripuit ignotum, et redit celerius in natale solum."

the crusade; to whom he dedicated his six books of the Trojan War, and in another poem, now supposed to be lost, entitled *Antiocheis*, he celebrated the war in which the archbishop was an actor.* The printed editions of the Trojan War are common enough, and it has been well criticised by Warton, who observes:—"The diction of this poem is generally pure, the periods round, and the numbers harmonious; and, on the whole, the structure of the versification approaches nearly to that of polished Latin poetry." It commences thus—

"Iliadum lachrymas, concessaque Pergama fatis,
Prælia bina ducum, bis adactam cladibus urbem
In cineras, quærimur: flemusque quod Herculis ira,
Hesiones raptus, Helenæ fuga, fregerit arcem,
Impulerit Phrygios, Danaas exciverit urbes."

The last three lines contain a specimen of that fantastic phraseology which was so fashionable in this age, wherein the several agents are first enumerated, their verbs afterwards given in the same order, then the subjects, and so on. The following curious example is found in a MS. of Trinity College, Cambridge (O, 2, 45, fol. 10), where this fancy is carried to an extreme which we have not often seen, and where the first, second, &c. words of each line, taken together, make a new series of hexameters, much more natural in their construction than the others.

* Warton says, "Mr. Wise, the late Radcliffe librarian, told me that a manuscript of the *Antiocheis* was in the library of the duke of Chandos at Canons." This library has, we believe, been dispersed, but where is the book here alluded to? We think it by no means unlikely that a copy of the *Antiocheis* will one day be found.

"Miles, venator, mercator, navita, princeps,
Debellat, sequitur, redimit, percurrit, egestat,
Prædones, lepores, merces, spumantia, mentem,
Cuspide, fervore, numismate, flamine, rebus,
Ferri, latrantis, tensus, venti, miserorum."

The style of Joseph is not, however, frequently disfigured by such fancies—it shows a deep and extensive knowledge of the classical writers. In the following address to Venus, we might almost suppose he had before his eyes Lucretius:

"Diva potens hominum, divûm imperiosa voluptas,
Vera deûm soboles, nostri Tritonis alumna,
Alma Venus, seu te convivam Tethyos urna
Poscit, seu nectar superûm, seu forte papaver
Elysium, flecte hæc teneros ad dona jugales,
Hos dignare favos." (lib. iii, v. 24.)

In the fifth book (v. 514), adverting to the uncertainty of human happiness, he thus elegantly compares the disappointments which trouble our brightest dreams to the cloud which from time to time shadows the clearest sky—to the poison which is sometimes concealed under the sweetest honey:

—— "Sub sole sereno
Nubem, sub risu lachrymas, sub melle venenum."

The fragment which Leland has preserved from the *Antiocheis* of Joseph, makes us mourn over the loss of a poem which would have been a noble monument of the classical taste of an Englishman of the twelfth century. After speaking of the glory of Britain in having given birth to such men as Constantine, Brennus, &c., whose names had then been made famous by Geoffrey of Mon-

mouth's History, he launches into the praise of his prime hero, Arthur, in these elegant and vigorous lines:

"Pellæum commendat fama tyrannum;
Pagina Cæsareos loquitur Romana triumphos;
Alciden domitis attollit gloria monstris.
Sed nec pinetum coryli, nec syderâ solem
Æquant. Annales Graios Latiosque revolve,
Prisca parem nescit, æqualem postera nullum
Exhibitura dies. Reges supereminet omnes;
Solus præteritis melior, majorque futuris."

How different is the easy simplicity of this passage from the laboured heaviness with which John de Hauteville has alluded to the same subject in one of the books of his 'Architrenius.' After speaking of the wanderings of ancient Brute, and of his arrival at our shores, he proceeds to describe the people he found there. The true poet sees the forms which his imagination has raised up distinctly and completely—he at once seizes those bolder characteristics which are necessary and sufficient to transfer what he sees in his own mind to the minds of his readers:—to the poetaster, on the contrary, every object is dim and indefinite, and, in his attempt to transfer to others what he really does not see himself, he loads his picture with useless minutiæ, neglects the necessary points, and creates but a daub. A few strokes are sufficient to delineate a savage—give him a raw hide for his covering, the wild wood for his domain, a cave for his den, and we know all; whereas it cost John de Hauteville, in the passage to which we allude, some six lines of tiresome antitheses to tell us how the raw hide of a wild beast yielded him a coat, blood his drink, the cavern a home, the heath a bed, and rapine food; violence administered to his lust, slaughter was his spectacle, strength gave

him empire, fury was his only courage, the spur of the moment administered arms, his death was the result of strife, and the bramble gave him a sepulchre; all which ideas are contained and included in the three to which we have first alluded. We must imagine Brute's first arrival at the long-hoped shore:

"Promissumque soli gremium monstrante Diana,
Incolumi census loculum ferit Albion alno.
Hæc eadem Bruto regnante Britannia nomen
Traxit in hoc tempus; solis Titanibus illa,
Sed paucis famulosa domus, quibus uda ferarum
Terga dabant vestes, cruor haustus, pocula trunci,
Antra lares, dumeta thoros, cœnacula rupes,
Præda cibos, raptus venerem, spectacula cædes,
Imperium vires, animos furor, impetus arma,
Mortem pugna, sepulchra rubus; monstrisque gemebat
Monticolis tellus; sed eorum plurima tractus
Pars erat occidui terror, majorque premebat
Te furor extremum zephyri, Cornubia, limen."

The lines which follow will show to our Cantabrigian friends the quantity of the name of the Cornish giant.

"Hos avidum belli Corinæi robur Averno
Præcipites misit; cubitis ter quatuor altum
Gogmagog Herculea suspendit in aera lucta,
Anthæumque suum scopulo demisit in æquor."

The picture of Thetis, drunk with the blood of the monster whom her waves had received, is somewhat fantastical.

"Potavitque dato Thetis ebria sanguine fluctus."

He might have intoxicated his goddess with anything rather than with the blood of an overgrown giant. The

idea presented to us is too much that of the drunkenness of a pig, after a plentiful repast on the fresh blood of a bullock.

The history which had been published by Geoffrey of Monmouth opened a rich storehouse of fiction for the poets who followed; yet, among the Anglo-Latin poets of the twelfth century, whose works have been handed down to us, Geoffrey himself is the only one who is represented as having employed his muse upon a subject taken from British history. We say *represented*, because we have great scruples against the claim of Geoffrey of Monmouth to the metrical Latin life of Merlin, which has been published under his name. It contains fuller allusions to the conquest of Ireland, and the comparatively prosperous reign of Henry II, than the prose Latin life by Geoffrey, and than we could well expect from a person who is said to have died in 1154 (see Tanner), who certainly did not live much later, and who therefore had only seen that reign in its commencement, and only knew the project of the conquest of Ireland in its embryo. The poem is dedicated to Robert bishop of Lincoln, who, if Geoffrey was its author, could only have been Robert de Cheineto or Querceto, the successor of Alexander, and who died, according to his contemporary, William of Newbury, in 1167. The writer of the poem represents the Robert whom he addresses as the very pink of learning, the glory of bishops, unequalled in the diversity of his attainments—

> "tu corrige carmen,
> Gloria pontificum, calamos moderando, Roberte!
> Scimus enim quia te perfudit nectare sacro
> Philosophia suo, fecitque per omnia doctum,
> Ut documenta dares, dux et præceptor in orbe."

It is his learning, indeed, which distinguishes him above all other prelates; and yet the only thing for which Robert de Cheineto is set down as remarkable, in the tract of Giraldus, *De Vitis Episcoporum*, which is printed in Warton's *Anglia Sacra*, is his giving away some of the church-lands in dower to marry his kinswoman (neptibus suis), not without considerable scandal (cum scandali nota). It is true that, though he wasted the property of his church, he bought for the place some good markets and fairs.

Alexander, the predecessor of Robert, was a man who lived in a style of princely magnificence, and who built for himself, at a great expense, three strong castles—buildings, saith Giraldus, very necessary in those tumultuous times. He and his uncle, Roger of Salisbury, are described as the two noblest and most powerful of the English bishops; but their riches provoked the cupidity of Stephen—they were treacherously seized, imprisoned, stripped of their castles and treasures, and treated with ignominy. Alexander was the patron, at least the friend, of Geoffrey of Monmouth. In the short prologue to the fourth book of his History, which consists of the Life and Prophecies of Merlin, Geoffrey, stating the reasons which led him to translate those prophecies from the British tongue, and speaking of Alexander as of a person then dead, says—"but above all, it was done at the earnest desire of Alexander bishop of Lincoln, a man highly distinguished for his devotion and prudence: there was not another among the clergy, or among the laity, who numbered in his attendance so many nobles, whom his gentle piety and benign generosity had drawn to his service."* And yet if the poem of Merlin be

* "Maxime autem Alexander Lincolniensis episcopus, vir summæ

the work of Geoffrey, we find him there speaking slightingly of Alexander, and asking of Robert better patronage than he had been able to obtain from his predecessor.

"Ergo meis cœptis faveas, vatemque tueri
Auspicio meliore velis, quam fecerit alter
Cui modo succedis, merito promotus honori.
Sic etenim mores, sic vita probata, genusque,
Utilitasque loci, clerus populusque petebant;
Unde modo felix Lincolnia fertur ad astra."

To us it seems nearly impossible that these two passages can have been written by the same person. The writer of the latter speaks of himself as a poet (*vates*), and a little further on, after having declared that the powers of Orpheus, and Horace, and Virgil, would have been insufficient to celebrate duly the fame of bishop Robert, he invokes the muses, who had been in the habit of attending to his former calls,

"At vos consuetæ mecum cantare camenæ."

It is probable that the sole authority for attributing the poem to Geoffrey of Monmouth is the six paltry lines which some later scribbler has added to the end, and that Leland, who mentions it, had seen this same manuscript (at Glastonbury), and had spoken upon the same authority. William of Newbury, who in the preface to his History complains bitterly that Geoffrey of Monmouth had made Arthur's little finger greater than the back of Alexander the Great, and that he had exalted Merlin above Isaiah, seems to have known no other life of Merlin by Geoffrey

religionis et prudentiæ: non erat alter in clero sive in populo cui tot famularentur nobiles, quos ipsius mansueta pietas et benigna largitas in obsequium ejus alliciebat."

than that contained in the fourth book of his History, which is in fact a separate tract. The same may be said of Giraldus, who never quotes Merlin's prophecies from the metrical life of the seer.

For our own part, we are inclined to think that the bishop Robert of the poem of Merlin, is no other than Robert Grosteste, to whom all its eulogies will apply, and consequently that the poem itself is a work of the earlier half of the thirteenth century. It is certain, which would have been a singular circumstance had the poem been a genuine work of so famous a man as Geoffrey, that the only perfect manuscript of this poem was written, as appears by internal evidence, after the year 1285, the other exemplars being merely copies of the mutilated one inserted in some copies of the Polychronicon, which was written in the reign of Edward III, and which gives it as an anonymous production.

The metrical life of Merlin, attributed to Geoffrey, is in many respects a curious and interesting poem; and though it is certainly very unequal, yet its style often rises much above mediocrity. It is, as might be expected, full of historical allusions, many of them by no means uninteresting. After describing the prosperous entrance of the Normans, and the great power they attained by their establishment in England—

"Indeque Neustrenses ligno trans æquora vecti,
Vultus ante suos et vultus retro ferentes,
Ferratis tunicis et acutis ensibus Anglos
Acriter invadent, periment, campoque fruentur;
Plurima regna sibi submittent, atque domabunt
Externas gentes per tempora, donec Erinnys
Circumquaque volans virus diffundet in ipsos"—

it gives us a short but vigorous picture of the troubles which agitated the reigns of most of the Norman kings of the twelfth century.

"Tum pax atque fides et virtus omnis abibit:
Undique per patrias committent prælia cives:
Virque virum prodet: non inveniętur amicus;
Conjuge despecta, meretrices sponsus adibit;
Sponsaque cui cupiet, despecto conjuge, nubet.
Non honor ecclesiis servabitur; ordo peribit;
Pontifices tunc arma ferent, tunc castra sequentur,
In tellure sacra turres et mœnia ponent,
Militibusque dabunt quod deberetur egenis."

These latter lines will call to the memory of the reader of our older chronicles, amongst other stories, that of Wimund, who, from an obscure peasant, became, first, monk of Furness, and afterwards bishop of Man, and then, not content with his episcopal dignity and power, made himself the chieftain of a band of robbers and pirates. With these he long overran and devastated with impunity the south-western parts of Scotland, until at last, falling by treachery into the hands of his enemies, he paid for his offences by the loss of his eyes and of his manhood. His spirit, still unsubdued by misfortunes, he was heard in after-days to boast, that had he even but the eye of a sparrow, his enemies should have small cause of exultation.

The good epoch of our early Latin writers was almost included in the twelfth century; yet their influence was felt far into the century following, though the leonines and the rhyming verses soon began to take the place of the more classic hexameters and pentameters, and the pure classic idioms and phrases were rejected for the fantastic

constructions of monkish invention. During the twelfth century we meet with constant allusions to the very best of the ancient Roman writers, but after that period we have every reason to think that their works were, with a few exceptions, entirely, or almost entirely, neglected.

The Anglo-Latin poets of the twelfth century were long popular in England, and we continually find them in the manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Chaucer has left us many proofs in his writings that their works were read very commonly in his time: he quotes, in one instance, Nigellus Wireker—

> "I have wel red in dan Burnel the asse,
> Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
> That, for a preestes sone gave him a knok
> Upon his leg, while he was yonge and nice,
> He made him for to lese his benefice"—

and a little after, he justly ridicules Geoffrey de Vinsauf, the author of the *Nova Poetria,* for his affected attempt at the pathetic.

To understand fully the Latin literature of our own land in the middle ages, we must not neglect that of the continent, which affords numerous points of contrast or comparison, and which, in itself, is not without attractions. It is a mistake to suppose that this old literature is interesting only to the antiquary. It possesses many intrinsic and original beauties, and it is deeply interesting in one respect, viz., that, whilst the poetry of the present (and of all ages of refined society) represents only the thoughts and feelings of its authors, that of the middle ages spreads before us the character and sentiments of nations. In the

ordinary Latin poetry, it is true, we must not look for the chaste beauties of the Augustan age. The Latin of the middle ages was a spoken language, and those who wrote in it created words, and took liberties, and used forms and constructions, which are barbarous to those who look upon it simply as the language of ancient Rome. The pure hexameters and elegiacs of the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries, are, however, as we have observed, often elegant and correct: we cannot say as much for the harsh jingle of the formal leonines; but it is in the simple rhyming verse, used, with short measure, for songs and satire, where all shackles and imitation of purer Latin are thrown aside, that we find the spirit and the peculiar beauties of the poetry of the darker ages.

A volume of German Latin poems was published by Grimm and Schmeller, under the title of 'Lateinische Gedichte des x and xi Jh.,' Göttingen, 1838, written chiefly during the tenth and eleventh centuries, and valuable for their intimate connexion with the earliest cycles of German romance. The first poem it contains, entitled *Waltharius*, relates a romantic incident connected with the invasion of the Frankish provinces by the Huns. In one of their excursions, the Huns, under their redoubtable leader Attila, exacted a tribute from the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Aquitanians, and carried off with them as hostages Hagen (a noble youth of Burgundy), Walthere, the hero of the story, and son of Alfhere king of Aquitaine, and Hiltgunt, daughter of Herric king of the Burgundians, for it seems to have been the custom for the tributary kings to send their own children as hostages. We may, perhaps, venture to doubt the truth of the declaration with which Attila receives the messenger who is sent by the tributary king to his camp:—

"Fœdera plus cupio quam prælia mittere vulgo.
Pace quidem Huni malunt regnare, sed armis
Inviti feriunt quos cernunt esse rebelles.
Rex ad nos veniens pacem dat atque resumat."

While their children were yet infants, Alfhere and Herric had negotiated a marriage between Walthere and Hiltgunt. In the court of Attila, Hiltgunt was soon a favourite with the queen of the Huns, and Walthere became a great hero, led the armies of the Huns, and was famed far and wide for his strength and his courage. On a time, Hagen, one of the hostages, escaped from Attila's court, and went home. The queen of the Huns, fearful that Walthere may follow his example, advises her husband to offer him one of the princesses of his court to wife, with the hopes of retaining him who had now become the great staff of the kingdom. Walthere evades the proposition, and regains Attila's confidence; but he was none the less determined to fly. He had, however, other reasons for declining the marriage; he loved his betrothed, Hiltgunt, and waited an opportunity of carrying her with him. After having acquainted the lady with his project, and prepared everything for putting it into execution, he invites Attila and his queen and the whole court to a feast, and makes them all so drunk, that they were none of them in condition to leave their beds until late the next day. In the mean time, the hero and his intended bride, who had purposely kept themselves sober, mounted swift horses, and, carrying with them rich treasures, were far advanced on the road towards Aquitaine.

They travelled on for many days, continuing their journey by night and hiding themselves in the woods by day. Walthere had provided fishing tackle, and they lived on

the fish which he caught in the numerous rivers with which they met. He also caught birds, but the mode by which he entrapped them is rather school-boy like:—

"Atque die saltus arbustaque densa requirens,
Arte accersitas pariter capit arte volucres,
Nunc fallens visco, nunc fisso denique ligno."

On the fortieth day they reached the banks of the Rhine, not far from the city of Worms, the seat of the Frankish court. Gunthere was at this time king. One day there were strange fishes, such as seldom were caught in the rivers of France, served on the table; and when the man who had sold them was examined, he said that they had been given him by a warrior, accompanied by a lady, as the payment of his fare for carrying them in his boat across the river. Gunthere immediately guessed the quality and name of the traveller, and resolved, rather contrary to the rules of hospitality, and in spite of the expostulations of Hagen, who knew that Walthere was a rough person to deal with, to follow him and rob him both of his treasure and his lady.

"Unum dico tibi," says Hagen, "regum fortissime, tantum,
Si tociens tu Walthárium pugnasse videres,
Atque nova tociens, quociens ego, cæda furentem,
Nunquam tam facile spoliandum forte putares."

Walthere, though not aware of the treachery intended against him, had chosen his resting-place in a cave on the top of a mountain, which rose in the midst of a wild wood, and which could only be approached by one person at a time. Here the Franks attacked him; and, after he had performed prodigies of valour, and slain some of the bravest warriors of Gunthere's court, they leave him, with the in-

tention of watching his steps and attacking him in the plain. The hero recognised Hagen at a distance by *his shield*. We learn also in this part of the poem that Walthere's armour was made by *Weland the smith*, and that its excellency on one occasion saved the hero's life, when he was taken somewhat unawares:

> "Ecce repentino Randolf Athleta cavallo,
> Prævertens reliquos hunc importunus adivit,
> Et mox ferrato petiit sub pectore conto,
> Et nisi duratis *Wielandia fabrica* giris
> Obstaret, spisso penetraverat ilia ligno."

The next morning Walthere again sets out on his journey, but he is overtaken by Gunthere and Hagen, and a terrible combat ensues, which ends by Walthere's chopping off king Gunthere's leg, and knocking out Hagen's eye and six of his teeth, and by Hagen's cutting off Walthere's hand: whereupon they all become friends, sit them down together on the grass, call the maiden to bind up their wounds and give them something to drink, and then become facetious on each other's losses.

The poem contains between fourteen and fifteen hundred lines, and is supposed to have been written in the tenth century. The story is well told, and is the more interesting because it was composed at a period when the state of society it represents was still present before people's eyes.

The *Waltharius* is followed by another early Latin poetical romance on the adventures of a hero called Ruotleib. All that remains of this poem consists of nineteen fragments, taken from so many scraps of vellum found at the beginnings and ends, and in the covers, of old manuscripts,

and amounting in all to upwards of two thousand lines. The third poem in the collection is entitled *Ecbasis cujusdam captivi per tropologiam:* its plot is laid in the year 812, and it was no doubt intended for a pungent satire; but the persons against whom it was directed are concealed under the names of the wolf, the fox, the calf, the lion, and so forth. If Grimm judges right that it is of the tenth century, it is interesting as being by far the earliest poem belonging to the famous cycle of *Reynard the Fox*. An appendix to Grimm's collection contains four Latin songs of the eleventh century from a Cambridge MS.; a song of the eleventh century (which is also connected with the Reynard cycle), entitled *Gallus et Vulpes;* and a longer poem called *Unibos,* which relates how by a concurrence of tricks and accidents a simple countryman contrives to cheat all his neighbours.

A little collection of Latin poems by a writer named Hilarius, was published by M. Champollion-Figeac, of the Royal Library, Paris, where the manuscript from which they are taken is preserved. Hilarius appears to have been an Englishman, and was certainly a disciple of the famous Abelard, one of the songs being addressed to that philosopher. Several of Hilarius's poems are addressed to nuns, who were most of them of English birth. The first piece in the volume is in praise of Eve, who had been consecrated by her parents in an English monastery:

> "Providerunt quendam locum qui erat in Anglia,
> Locum bonum et famosum, cui nomen Clintonia.
> Ibi Dei genetricis in quadam æcclesia,
> Tam a patre quam a matre data fuit filia."

We are inclined to think that the English house to which

Eve belonged was a nunnery at Lincoln, and that she was consecrated in the cathedral church there, which is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, Clintonia being a simple error of the scribe for Linconia, or Lincolia.* Afterwards Eve went to France, and lived in solitude with a monk of the name of Herveus, until her death.

The poetry or the Latin of Hilarius (who lived in the earlier part of the twelfth century) is by no means of a high character. Perhaps the best specimen is the song in which he celebrates the beauty of the monastery, the goodness of the wine, and the fairness of the fountain, of Chalautre-la-Petite, in the diocese of Sens. We will quote a few verses as a specimen, premising that we do not hesitate to correct the orthography:

"Caliastrum fama prædixerat
Nil valere: sed fallax fuerat:
Quæ perverse dissimulaverat
Bona quibus locus exuberat.

Regum aulas atque palatia
Clericorum æquant hospitia;
Sunt nimirum loca regalia,
Non eremi vasta mapalia.

Vinetumque multum et fertile,
Vinum confert firmum et nobile;
Non Falernum est comparabile,
Nec gustavit Silenus simile.

* "Where the dean of Lincoln's house is, in the mynster close of Lincoln and thereabout, was a monastery of nuns afore the time that Remigius began the new minster." (Leland, Itin.)

Fontis quoque susurrans rivulus
Per quem alte videtur calculus,
Pegasæo nimirum æmulus,
Voluptatis accedit cumulus.

Fons sincerus, fons indeficiens,
Fons per solem siccari nesciens,
Ad quem tendat doctrinam sitiens,
Inde bibat, et erit sapiens."

While speaking of the middle-age Latin poets, we cannot resist the opportunity of doing some justice to a poet of considerable reputation in his time—we mean John de Garlande. The writer of the article on his works in the eighth volume of the *Histoire Litteraire de France*, and the editor of his curious *Dictionarium* (of which there are several manuscripts in England), in one of the publications of the French Historical Commission, * have placed him in the eleventh century. In one part of the *Dictionarium* he speaks of having been present at the siege of Toulouse—"*In civitate Tholosæ, nondum sedato tumultu belli, vidi antemuralia, &c. . . . . quarum una pessum dedit Simonem comitem Montifortis.*" This siege of Toulouse, says M. Géraud, took place either in 1079 or in 1098, at one of which periods was written this present tract, and the latter part of the sentence relating to Simon de Montfort, must be an interpolation (*cette phrase incidente a été evidemment ajoutée après coup*). Not content with this, the author of the article in the *Histoire Litteraire* and M. Géraud agree in opposing his claim to be an Englishman, by these

* Paris sous Philippe-le-Bel, d'après des Documens Originaux Par H. Géraud. 4to, Paris, 1837.

arguments, which seem to us at best rather rash, even if they were right as to his age,—.

" 1. That before William the Conqueror, names of family and names taken from places were unknown in Great Britain.

" 2. That there is not in all England a place from which he could have taken his name.

" 3. That before the conquest of England by William the Bastard, *that country did not possess a single man who possessed so great a variety of knowledge as John de Garlande.*"

To oppose to these arguments, which show us how far ingenuity can sometimes lead people astray, we have in the first place the poet's own assertion as to the place of his birth, although at the time he wrote it he had been so long in France that it had become a second country to him; in his poem *De Triumphis Ecclesiæ*, (in eight books, chiefly on the war against the Albigenses), MS. Cotton. Claud. A. x. fol. 86. r°. he says,—

" Anglia cui mater fuerat, cui Gallia nutrix,
Matri nutricem præfero marte meam."

And accordingly throughout the poem he constantly shows more or less partiality to both—as, (fol. 73, r°.)

" Quod Francos fortes faciat, patet ordine rerum,
Religio, belli gratia, firma fides.
Anglos argenti defendit copia, gentis
Ingenium, cleri gloria, legis amor."

And again, (fol. 76, r°.)

" Sunt duo sacrati reges, est Gallicus unus,
Anglicus est alter, vivat uterque potens."

In another part of this poem, (fol. 84, r°.) he says, that while young he had studied at Oxford under John of London:—

"Effectus laicus fuit hoc in tempore doctor
Oxoniæ, viguit sensibus ipse tamen.
Omni litterula privatus scivit, et ivit
Ut laicus, sero vir Plato, mane rudis.
Hic de Londoniis fuerat, dictusque Johannes,
Philosophos juveni legerat ante mihi."

John of London flourished about 1270 or 1280, and was a great friend of Roger Bacon. While he was still very young, John de Garlande seems to have gone to study at the university of Paris. We learn from the sixth book of the above-mentioned poem that, driven thence by the troubles of the times, he went to the university of Toulouse about 1229. He was there throughout the whole of the crusade against the Albigenses, which he describes from his personal observation; and gives a very particular account of the death of Simon de Montfort, which will explain the allusion in the above-mentioned passage of his *Dictionarium*. In the course of the history he gives various incidents of his own life; and, among other things, tells us that while he was at Toulouse he wrote his other great poem, the *Epithalamium Beatæ Virginis*. After the war he returned to Paris, where he was about 1265, and he is mentioned by Roger Bacon as eminent there in 1267. It was after his return to Paris that he wrote the poem *De Triumphis Ecclesiæ*. There can be no doubt that the *Dictionarium* was written after his return from Toulouse, in the latter half of the thirteenth century, probably when he taught at Paris.

ESSAY VI.

ABELARD AND THE SCHOLASTIC PHILOSOPHY.

FEW men have enjoyed so long a popular reputation as Peter Abelard; and yet there are not many who could give a satisfactory answer to the question, "Who and what was he?" unless it were by saying that he was the lover of Heloise—so completely has this incident of his private life absorbed, in modern times, the more substantial fame which the philosopher enjoyed through many ages! Even if we look to the ordinary sources of popular information, such, for instance, as Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary, where we expect to find some account of the part which Abelard played in the grand scene of intellectual movement during the middle ages, we are simply told that he held some strange unorthodox opinions, for which he was persecuted; that St. Bernard wrote against him, and called him by certain abusive names, and a little more in the same style: and we are led to conclude that the founder of the scholastic philosophy, instead of being an extraordinary man, was a conceited simpleton—nay, we wonder how he could have obtained any reputation at all. Even when we turn to more learned and philosophical works, our information is not much more satisfactory, for the few details given by his contemporaries on his doctrines

and mode of teaching, and the neglect to which his works have been condemned in later times (and which we must own is not unmerited, if we look upon them for their intrinsic value alone), have concurred in rendering Abelard's history obscure. There is, however, something of good to be gathered from the very wild-fruits of the intellects of great men; and it has been often lamented that we had so few published materials for the history of the scholastic philosophy at its origin, for Abelard may truly be considered as one of the corner-stones on which it was built. It was with such feelings as these that Victor Cousin selected, with unwearied industry, the inedited works of the philosopher, in a bulky quarto volume,* and, in pursuance of the same object, he has long been busily engaged in searching after lost or unknown works of our great countryman, Roger Bacon.

There is no field of observation more instructive and interesting than that which is presented to us by the study of man's intellect; and that equally whether we follow it with wonder, untrammelled, amid the glorious dreams of Grecian philosophy, even the errors of which show us not only the infinite difference that distinguishes the workings of mind from the workings of matter, but also how necessary to the former is the pole-star of revealed religion to enable it to steer clear of the dangerous shoals of vain speculation; or whether, with no less degree of admiration, we trace its efforts, in a barbarous age, to burst the shackles of bigotry and ignorance, when, released, the very impulse

* Ouvrages inédits d'Abélard, pour servir à l'Histoire de la Philosophie scholastique en France. Edited by Victor Cousin. 4to, Paris. Imprim. royal. 1836.

which its struggles had generated carried it far beyond the appointed goal.

What is commonly understood by the term scholastic philosophy, which consisted in the application of logic (or dialectics) to theology, took its rise in the eleventh century; but the question on which chiefly it turned had long been canvassed, and was, in fact, one of those which the middle ages had borrowed from the ancients, although it had received a barbarous clothing in the course of transmission. Before the twelfth century, the Greek writers, such as Plato and Aristotle, were only known to the people of Western Europe by some imperfect Latin versions of a few of their works. No translator enjoyed a higher reputation than Boethius, whose versions of the Topics, Analytics, &c., of Aristotle, and of the Isagoge (or Introduction) of Porphyry, were long the text books in the schools. It was a passage in the latter of these works which conveyed to the scholars of the middle ages the question that had so long divided the ancient philosophers, and which, when it began to be examined, caused so many dissensions among the moderns. The subject of Porphyry's work is the different branches of dialectics; but, when speaking of genera and species in a logical point of view, he alludes in the following words, to a deeper philosophical discussion to which they had given rise: Αὐτίκα περὶ γενῶν τε καὶ εἰδῶν, τὸ μὲν εἴτε ὑφέστηκεν εἴτε καὶ ἐν μόναις ψιλαῖς ἐπινοίαις κεῖται, εἴτε καὶ ὑφεστηκότα σώματά ἐστιν ἢ ἀσώματα, καὶ πότερον χωριστὰ ἢ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς καὶ περὶ ταῦτα ὑφεστῶτα παραιτήσομαι λέγειν· βαθυτάτης οὔσης τῆς τοιαύτης πραγματείας, καὶ ἄλλης μείζονος δεομένης ἐξετάσεως. (*Porphyr. Isag.*) "For example," he says, in excusing himself from entering into profound questions, "with

regard to the genders and species, I will hold myself excused from saying whether they are things that exist in themselves, and have an objective reality, or whether they be mere abstract notions, existing only in the intelligence, as, also, if they exist in themselves, whether they be corporeal or incorporeal, and whether they exist separate from sensible objects, or in and about them; for this is a most profound matter, and requires another and more extensive examination." It was, indeed, the different solutions of this question which distinguished the two contending systems of Plato and Aristotle; the former of these philosophers having taught the independent existence of the genera and species (or, as he terms them, ideas), whilst the latter held, at least to a certain degree, the contrary doctrine. As it was presented to the people of the middle ages in the Latin of Boethius, the passage of Porphyry stood thus, somewhat disguised by the unmeaning expression *in solis nudis intellectibus*:—"Mox de generibus et speciebus illud quidem sive subsistant sive in solis nudis intellectibus posita sint, sive subsistentia corporalia sint an incorporalia, et utrum separata a sensibilibus an in sensibilibus posita et circa hæc consistentia, dicere recusabo. Altissimum enim negotium est hujusmodi, et majoris egens inquisitionis."

This passage of Boethius, sufficiently harmless in itself, had been read during many ages, and discussed in a simple logical form, by those who little thought of the precipice on the edge of which they were treading, until the dispute was suddenly revived in the eleventh century to give food to the intellectual appetite which was at that period excited. When we say, however, that the question had not been discussed before the eleventh century, we must not conceal the circumstance that the study of Boethius, and of the

works of Aristotle, as he commented upon them, had established, unawares, in the schools, a prejudice in favour of the Aristotelian mode of solution, which influenced not a little the fate of the question, when that solution was advocated anew under the name of *nominalism*. It may also be observed that Boethius introduced a new term for the ideas, or the genera and species, which he called *universalia*, or universals, a name borrowed from the old Greek philosophic expression, τὰ καθ' ὅλου, and which was afterwards exclusively adopted by the scholastics. But although the caricatured philosophy of Aristotle, which thus took the name of nominalism, (from its teaching that the genera and species, or, in other words, the universals, consisted in mere words or names,) had not Platonism to contend with, still it was by no means undisputed master of the field, for it met with a far more powerful opponent in the doctrine and tendency of Christianity, which involved the presumption of idealism in almost all its relations. The history of the scholastic philosophy is, in fact, nothing more than that of the vicissitudes of these two contending systems, as, from time to time, they presented themselves in different forms. As philosophical systems, each had its truths and its errors, or, in other words, the mistakes of each were the erroneous generalizations of particular truths: and we cannot fail to observe, as we go along, how often the solution of important questions was influenced by the erroneous applications of terms and definitions, and was made to depend on what were little better than quibbles in words.

"From these different passages" (observes Victor Cousin, after quoting Boethius, Rhabanus Maurus, and an anonymous author of the tenth century), "it results that, in the tenth century, as well as in the ninth, the first parts of the

Organum were known and studied in the translation of Boethius, and commented on by the aid of the commentaries of this same Boethius; that the problem stated by Porphyry, in the first lines of the introduction, excited already some attention; that the peripatetician solution, spread by Boethius, prevailed generally, but that still there existed along with it a different solution, which, without obtaining the same credit, had also its partisans. Here, then, we see two doctrines, two schools, in presence of each other, in the ninth and in the tenth centuries. But the simple existence of two opinions at a given time is not sufficient to give them a claim to a place in history. Realism and nominalism existed, doubtlessly, in embryo, both in the phrase of Porphyry, and in the commentary of Boethius, and in that of Rhabanus Maurus, and in the marginal notes of our anonymous writer; but of their true principles, with their necessary consequences, people were profoundly ignorant; their connexion with the great religious and political questions was not even suspected. It was as yet only two different modes of interpreting a passage of Porphyry, which remained, without attracting notice, in the obscurity of the schools, and lived tolerably well together in the belief in their common insignificance; but, as they became better understood, and as they enlarged and developed themselves, these two interpretations were called up to raise memorable discussions, to trouble the church and the state, and in this manner to take their rank in history." (*Introd.* p. lxxxv.)

The history of opinions, like that of people, is often obscure at their sources. Thus it happens that, with abundance of materials for the history of the Scholastic Philosophy at a later period, we have very few documents

that throw light upon its first beginnings, and little has been hitherto known of the exact opinions of the nominalists of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The collection published by Victor Cousin is, in this respect, of extreme importance, for it affords us more exact information on this subject than all the previously edited materials taken collectively. As might be expected from the tendency already observed, the first movement was in favour of nominalism. Roscelin, a native of Britany, and canon of Compeigne in the latter half of the eleventh century, who is said to have derived his doctrines in part from the teaching of one John of Chartres (of whom very little is known), is considered, in many respects justly, as the father of nominalism. Roscelin boldly followed up the path on which he had entered. He denied altogether the existence of the universals, and, admitting reality only in the individuals, he taught that everything which was not in itself individual was a mere word or name. He treated the qualities of bodies in the same way as the universals; thus, for instance, while he admitted the existence of the body coloured, he denied entirely that of the colour. In the same manner, he denied the existence of parts of bodies, which he said were also nothing but pure words. Abelard, in one of the treatises printed by Victor Cousin, has preserved some of the arguments by which Roscelin supported his last hypothesis.

"Roscelin made two arguments to prove that parts have not a real existence. 1. To say that a part of a thing is as real as that thing, is the same as to say that it makes a part of itself, for a thing is only what it is with all its parts. 2. The part of a whole ought to precede that whole; for the components ought to precede the thing

composed; but the part of a whole makes part of the whole itself; therefore the part ought to precede itself, which is absurd. Let us cite this argument as it stands in the text: 'If any one said that this thing, which is a house, consists of other things, for instance, of walls and of foundations, Roscelin opposed him by reasoning as follows: If this thing, which is a wall, is a part of this thing, which is a house, since the house is nothing but the wall itself, the roof, the foundation, &c., it results that the wall will be a part of itself and of the rest; but how could it be a part of itself? Moreover, every part precedes, naturally, its whole; but how can the wall precede itself and the rest, since nothing can, in any manner, precede itself?'" * (*Introd.* p. xci.)

We see, then, that Roscelin, though he was only pursuing the same track in which the ancient peripateticians had already set their feet, had far outstripped them in his progress, and had deduced results of which they did not even dream. In fact, he had entered upon an untrodden field of philosophical speculation, and with him we begin a new and distinctly marked period of its history. But Roscelin did not confine himself to dialectics, or to what had been previously allowed as the domain of philosophy; his presumption led him still farther; he made the dangerous but bold experiment of applying his philosophical system to theology, and, although he pretended to undertake the defence of Christianity, the doctrines he introduced were soon found to strike at its very roots. The dogma of the Trinity was the rock on which Roscelin was wrecked.

* Abelard, de Divis. et Deficit. p. 491 (ed Cousin.)

"If parts, qualities, and relations do not exist, and are but words, the mutual relations of the three divine persons disappear, and there is only left either one sole God, without a trinity of persons, or three persons, or rather three beings, three Gods, without unity; because unity, which is not that of the individual, is for nominalism a pure word. Hence the dilemma of Roscelin: Either the three persons of God are not only three persons, but three things, which exist each individually and separately, as three angels or three souls exist, and having nothing between them in common except resemblance, or identity of will and power; or the three persons make but one only God, and, in this case, this God alone exists without distinction of persons; he acts all entire when he acts, and, consequently, we must say, that the Father and the Holy Ghost must have become incarnate when the Son became incarnate. But this last hypothesis is absurd; we must, therefore, adopt the first, and admit that the three persons are really three distinct beings, and, as we may say, three Gods."

Such was the opinion Roscelin taught; it was, in fact, an absolute tritheism; and we need not wonder if it drew upon him, in such an age, the wrath of the church. The adventurous philosopher was dragged before a council at Soissons, in 1092 or 1093, where his doctrines, which had been attacked by Anselm, were condemned, and he was himself deprived of his clerical dignities, and obliged to quit France. He took refuge in England, where he still persisted in his own doctrines; but he made himself so obnoxious by his attacks upon the corruptions of the ecclesiastic government, that he was compelled at last to seek an obscure shelter in his native land, Britany, where he lived till after 1121. We know neither when he died, nor

whether he ever retracted the theological opinions which had brought upon him so many misfortunes.

The strong opposition which had been made to the Nominalism of Roscelin gave rise naturally to a system, whose tendency was directed towards the opposite extreme. Anselm, who attacked triumphantly his theological opinions, adopted unhesitatingly the doctrine that the universals were real, which has, from this primary principle on which it rests, received the denomination of realism. But the great philosophical opponent of Roscelin, and the father of scientific realism, was William of Champeaux, so called from the village where he was born, about the middle of the eleventh century, and who was certainly one of the most distinguished men of his age. In the first years of the twelfth century, we find William of Champeaux teaching in the cloister of Nôtre Dame at Paris, of which church he was archdeacon. In 1108 he became monk, and retired to what was then the chapel (afterwards the abbey) of St. Victor, where he recommenced his teaching, gratuitously, and with great reputation. In 1113 he was named bishop of Châlons sur Marne, and he died in the beginning of 1121, having discontinued his teaching from the time when he was consecrated to the episcopacy.

Before we speak further of the realism of William of Champeaux, we will again borrow from the valuable introduction of Victor Cousin.

"We have just reconnoitred, as we may say, the field of battle of the rising scholastic philosophy, the character, pretensions, vices, and advantages, of the two schools which constituted it by the very circumstance of their dividing it. The school of the realists admits the reality of the universals, that is to say, of species and genera, of

the human race (gendre humain) for instance; and this example, which is traced up to Aristotle, once put in circulation by Boethius, and accepted by St. Anselm, as very probably it was by Roscelin, became the example on which the two parties gave each other the rendezvous. Within these limits the realist school is right; but it overleaps these limits, and, confounding with the true universals, with the true genera, pure abstractions, such as colour separated from the body coloured, it falls into the celebrated vice of realizing abstractions. On another side, nominalism shows the illusion of abstractions realized, and gives the secret of it; this secret is the power of language, which realizes in some sort the conceptions of the mind by clothing them in a form at which we afterwards stop, as though it had an intrinsic reality. Nominalism is, therefore, right in its turn, and it is useful in pointing out the danger of realised abstractions, and in calling attention to the wonders of language; but it is wrong, and it is itself profoundly dangerous, when it reduces essential attributes to accidental qualities, and confounds with conceptions that are purely verbal, existences that are immaterial, it is true, but real, which, without doubt, are conceptions in man's thought, and words in his language, but which are independent of the conceptions which man forms of them, and of the words with which he clothes them; existences, without which the conceptions which we form of them to ourselves, and every general conception, and, consequently, language itself, would be impossible; existence, in fact, the reality of which being destroyed, carries with it that of all our sciences, with their classifications, and reduces them to the footing of conventional arrangements devoid of truth, and unworthy to occupy for a moment the attention

of a serious man. To see everywhere nothing but abstract conceptions borrowed from sensible data and realised by words is the tendency of nominalism, and of the school of which it is the extreme but faithful expression, namely, the empiric school; and to realise abstractions is the tendency of the opposite school, and the fatal precipice to which the genius of idealism pushes it. Such were the two schools represented, at the end of the eleventh century and the beginning of the twelfth, by Roscelin and St. Anselm." (*Introd.* p. cviii.)

Great as was the fame of William of Champeaux among his contemporaries, none of his various philosophical works seem to be preserved to the present day; and, without the notices contained in the newly edited works of Abelard, we should have remained ignorant even of the exact form of the system which he taught. In the person of Roscelin the doctrines of the nominalists had been driven in disgrace from the field; and the realists, in the height of their triumph, published their opinions without much reserve, and, with nothing to oppose, they pursued them until they found themselves also treading upon unsafe ground. A passage in the *Historia Calamitatum* gives us a clear and intelligible account of the doctrines which William held at this period. "The universal, according to William of Champeaux, that is to say, the genus (*genus*), is something real (*rem*), which is identical (*eamden*), essentially (*essentialiter*), integrally and simultaneously (*totam simul*), in all the individuals which participate of it and compose the genus: so that these individuals do not differ at all in their essence (*quorum quidem nulla esset in essentia diversitas*), but only in their accidental elements (*sed sola multitudine accidentium varietas*)." This is the system of the

realists in its utmost rigour, which attributed the essence of things to the universals and the genera, and reduced the individual to a simple accident. But nominalism, discomfited in Roscelin, raised its head again in Abelard, although in a modified form, and became the assailant in its turn.

Peter Abelard was born at Palais, near Nantes, in Britany, in the year 1079. We have his own authority, in the works brought to light by Victor Cousin, to prove that he had first studied under his countryman Roscelin, probably while the latter was living in obscurity in Britany. At the end of the eleventh century, when twenty years old, and already imbued with strong prejudices in favour of nominalism, Abelard went to Paris, and placed himself under William of Champeaux, the most zealous champion of the opposite school. After he had studied patiently the doctrines of his new master, and made himself well acquainted with all their weak points, he began to attack them with unceasing perseverance, and even followed his master to the new school at St. Victor's, where, according to his own boast, he compelled William to modify in some measure his own opinions. The doctrine within which William of Champeaux now entrenched himself, is stated by Abelard, in the *Historia Calamitatum* in the following phrase: the universal was *rem eamdem non essentialiter sed indifferenter*,* or, in other words, the identity of the individuals of the same genus does not arise

* In the common text we have *individualiter* instead of *indifferenter*, which is the reading furnished by another MS., and the correctness of which is proved by what Abelard says in his other works now first published. We cannot but admire the manner in which Victor Cousin has established the reading, and cleared up the meaning of this passage.

from their essence itself, but from certain elements which recur in all these individuals *without any difference*. In this new theory the universals are no longer the essence of the being, the substance of things: but, though considerably modified, it is still realism, for the real existence of the universals is not even put in peril.

It has been generally supposed that this second opinion of William of Champeaux was the doctrine held by Abelard himself. That this, however, was not the case is clearly proved by the tracts edited by Victor Cousin, where we find Abelard not only attacking both theories with equal vehemence, but also opposing, in the same manner, the school of his master Roscelin. It would take too much space to reproduce here all the arguments he employed against them, which are first brought to light by the publication of the tracts just quoted; but we will give a specimen from the prefatory introduction of Victor Cousin, because it shows what some writers meant, who say that he attacked his master William with the irresistible weapons of ridicule and wit.

"Before attacking the realist school, he first states the thesis which it sustained: Humanity is a thing essentially one, which does not possess in itself, but to which there arrive, certain forms which make Socrates. This thing remaining essentially the same, receives, in the same manner, other forms which make Plato and other individuals of the species man; and distinct from these forms, which apply themselves to this matter to make Socrates, there is nothing in Socrates which is not the same, at the same time, in Plato, but under the forms of Plato. Abelard's polemic against this doctrine is long and close, and it is very difficult so detach a few links; but the different argu-

ments of which it is composed depend upon one primary and fundamental argument, which represents it almost entire, and of which the others are little more than developments. This argument is, in some degree, the protest of common sense against realism; and, like every argument taken from common sense, it attacks by means of ridicule, and has the air of being irresistible. Abelard, therefore, presents it with the greatest confidence; he declares that no reply is possible. Here it is, in its simplest expression: if the genus is the essence of the individual, and if it is all entire in each individual, so that the entire substance of Socrates is, at the same time, the entire substance of Plato, it follows that, when Plato is at Rome, and Socrates at Athens, the substance of both is, at the same time, at Rome and at Athens, and consequently in two places at the same time. Another form of the argument: the substance of Socrates, the universal man in Socrates, the man become Socrates, is the Socratic man, or, in other terms, Socrates himself; but, the universal man, in putting on the form of Socrates, has admitted it all entire in its essence, and carries it with it wherever it is; when the universal man in Plato and in Socrates is at Rome and at Athens, the Socratic man, that is to say, Socrates, is at the same time at Athens and at Rome; and the same may be said with regard to Plato and other men. 'If it be so,' says Abelard, 'how can it be denied that Socrates is, at the same time, at Rome and at Athens? In fact, wherever Socrates is, there also is the universal man, which has in its whole quantity put on the form of Socratity; for all which the universal takes, it takes it in all its quantity. If then the universal, which is all entire affected with Socratity, is at Rome at the same time all entire in Plato, it is impossible that, at the same

time and in the same place, there should not be found the Socratity which contained this essence all entire. But everywhere, where Socratity is in the man, there is Socrates; for Socrates is the Socratic man. To this a reasonable mind can make no answer,' (quid contra hoc dicere possit, rationabile ingenium non habet.)

"Perhaps," observes Victor Cousin, "this argument is not so irresistible as Abelard believed, and a reasonable mind might make more than one reasonable objection to it. The whole force of the argument lies in the confusion in Socrates of the genus and the individual, of the universal man and of the particular man, of humanity and of Socrates. But this confusion is imposed gratuitously by Abelard on the realist school, whose principle, on the contrary, is the distinction in each thing of a general element and a particular element. Here the two extremities, equally false, are these two hypotheses: either the distinction of the element general, and of the element particular carried to separation, or their non-separation carried to the abolition of their difference; and the truth is that these two elements are, at the same time, essentially distinct and inseparably united. Every reality is double: the bond of this duality is organization, and the result life. Abelard always supposes that a universal, to use this language, cannot take a form without retaining it constantly in all its quantity: "quidquid res universalis suscipit, tota sua quantitate retinet," a very equivocal proposition, which implies that, when the genus humanity has taken the form of Socrates, and comes to take another form, that of Plato, it keeps the first, which is absurd; and that a substance cannot take successively several forms, and remain identi-

cally the same, which is, nevertheless, incontestable." (*Introd.* p. cxxxiii.)

Abelard refutes Roscelin's doctrine of the non-existence of parts, thus :—

"We may say of the wall that it makes part of itself and the rest, but only so far as they are joined and taken together. When we say that the house is these three things, the wall, the roof, and the foundation, we do not mean to say that it is each of them taken apart, but all three united and taken together; in the same manner the wall is a part of itself and the rest joined together, that is to say, of the entire house, but not of itself all alone; it precedes itself and the rest taken together, but it does not, on that account, precede itself, for the wall existed before it was joined to the rest. In the same manner every part must exist before it forms the collection in which it is to be comprised."

In his controversies, Abelard was, in fact, right against all systems, because all systems contained something of wrong to fall before his assaults. The tactics of the combatants in the war of opinions which perpetuated and gave life to the scholastic philosophy were always the same; each party attacked the weak parts of his adversary, the possession of which gave him the temporary victory, until his own weak parts were attacked and carried by the same, or by another opponent. Such was the case with Abelard. The advantage which he had gained over William of Champeaux, in forcing him to modify his opinions on the nature of the universals, was a decided victory over realism; Abelard's fame was established, and his school crowded by students. In attacking nominalism, he was only kicking

a prostrate adversary; and in so doing he was but masking himself, for the system which Abelard built, upon the defeat of the two others, was nothing more than nominalism a little disguised. We have not space to enter far into this system, and would willingly refer those of our readers who feel interest in the subject to the admirable Introduction to Victor Cousin's Collection, which we have done little more than abridge, and give in a popular form. It was our object more to show the ground which Abelard occupied, and on which he built, than to detail his opinions. In opposing realism and nominalism, he held that the universals were neither things nor words: individuals only exist, and they are in themselves neither genus nor species; but they have certain resemblances which the mind can perceive; and their resemblances, considered alone, with abstraction of differences, form classes more or less comprehensive, which are called species and genera. These do not exist of themselves, yet they are something more than words—they are *conceptions* of the mind. Such was the doctrine of Abelard, which has received the name of *conceptualism*.

Abelard followed the example of Roscelin, in the dangerous path of applying his philosophy to theology. "He is," says Victor Cousin, "in theology what he is in philosophy, neither altogether orthodox, nor entirely heretical; but much nearer to heresy than to orthodoxy." In the celebrated treatise of *Sic et Non*, so much cried down by his orthodox contemporaries, and which Victor Cousin has printed, we see clearly the boldness of his presumption, although this book consists of little more than a statement of questions of theology for discussion, without the slightest attempt to bias their solution; yet those ques-

tions are, many of them, of such a nature, as were calculated to call into life all the worst heresies which had torn the church. We have no means of ascertaining the shape which Abelard's conceptualism gave to most of these solutions: but we know that it drew upon him the indignation of the church. Abelard fell upon the same rock as his predecessor, the doctrine of the Trinity. The spirit of nominalism drove him to the same point; he was thrown upon the same dilemma which had presented itself to Roscelin, but he seems to have chosen the solution which his early master had rejected. In the philosophy of Abelard, God becomes a simple unity; and the Trinity, as far as we can understand him, seems to be reduced to something like one of his *conceptions*.

What Anselm was to Roscelin, St. Bernard was to Abelard. The philosopher was dragged from council to council; and his spirit of innovation drew upon him a life of trouble and calamity. His school fell, in a great measure, with himself; but the struggle between nominalism and realism, under different forms, has continued even to the present day.

ESSAY VII.

ON DR. GRIMM'S GERMAN MYTHOLOGY.

HERE is no subject of inquiry relating to the history of a people more interesting than its popular mythology and superstitions. In these we trace the early formation of nations, their identity or analogy, their changes, as well as the inner texture of the national character, more deeply than in any other circumstances, even in language itself. It has been brought before us in all its generality by the *Mythologie* of Dr. James Grimm, one of the most admirable books that Germany has ever sent us. An English reader will not be sorry to be made in some degree acquainted with this work, although it is in itself too extensive, and at the same time by far too compact, to allow of our attempting to give an analysis of its contents. We will add a few facts from our own desultory researches, which bear on the subject introduced in it.

Christianity was first introduced among the Teutonic tribes about the beginning of the fourth century, when a few missionaries carried it to the banks of the Rhine, and to the Alamanns and Goths. Among the latter people it obtained a permanent establishment during that century, being first adopted by the West-Goths, and afterwards by

the East-Goths. The Vandals and the Gepidæ followed soon after in their footsteps. The Burgundians, in Gaul, became Christians at the beginning of the fifth century, and the Suevi, in Spain, about fifty years later. At the conclusion of this century and the beginning of the next, the Franks were converted, and they were followed by the Alamanns and the Langobards. In the seventh and eighth centuries followed the conversion of the Bavarians; in the eighth, that of the Frieslanders, the Hessians, and the Thuringians; and towards the ninth, that of the Saxons. In Britain, the Anglo-Saxons had received the Gospel about the conclusion of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century. In the tenth century the Danes became Christians; at the beginning of the eleventh, the Norwegians; in the second half of the eleventh, the Swedes and the Icelanders. The period of the establishment of Christianity among the Slavic and Hungarian tribes varied from the eighth to the eleventh century. The Lithuanians were not converted till the beginning of the fifteenth; and the Laplanders are scarcely more than half Christians at the present day.

Just as in our island we have districts where the people are much more ignorant than in others, and where the popular superstitions still retain their hold on the peasantry, so was it with the Teutonic tribes in the earlier ages of their Christianity. In the midst of the Christian peoples, there were still districts where the light of the Gospel had not penetrated. Thus in Neustria, the banks of the Loire and the Seine—in Burgundia, the Vosges—in Austrasia, the Ardennes, were inhabited in the sixth and seventh centuries by people who were mere Pagans. Similarly there dwelt pagan tribes towards Friesland and

in Flanders, long after the surrounding tribes had been converted. From this circumstance it arises, that among some of the earlier monkish writers we have notices of heathen customs which they had had an opportunity of witnessing, and allusions to articles of the older creed which still in their time survived partially, and which now throw great light on the history of *Teutonic Mythology*.

Moreover, when Christianity was fully established, in their conversion the old pagans had received a new belief, without quitting altogether their old one. There were certain beings of the ancient creed who were worshipped as gods, and with whom the people were only acquainted through their priests; and with these Christianity of course clashed at its first introduction. But there was a much larger class of beings of the popular belief, with whom the people supposed they had a nearer connection, and whose influence, good or evil, they believed themselves to be daily experiencing; these were, like themselves, works of the Creator,—with passions, too, like themselves, and in whose invisible society they were themselves frequently living. They were substantial beings also, but of a far more refined nature, and infinitely more powerful. They wielded the elements, caused most of the visible convulsions of nature, as well as many of the accidents with which humanity was visited. While Christianity destroyed every where the worship of Woden, the belief in the airy spirits of the popular creed was unimpaired; for, whatever different opinion the monks might entertain of their nature and calling, they found nothing in their own faith which directly proscribed them.

In fact, the popular belief in these things and their effects was so intimately interwoven in the national charac-

ter, that they held by it like the language, with which, also, they had a strong tie in the multitude of words and names for things and circumstances which called them perpetually to men's minds. The common ceremonies of life at every minute bore allusions to them; things so difficult to eradicate, that now, after so many centuries of successive improvement and refinement, in our salutations, in our eating and drinking, even in our children's games, we are perpetually, though unwittingly, doing the same things which our forefathers did in honour or in fear of the elves and nymphs of the heathen creed.

Many of these ceremonies and customs appeared to the monks, and with reason, to be much more objectionable than others. Some of them bore too pointed an allusion to the worship of the old pagan deities—others were of a degrading nature, or of a mischievous tendency, which was quite at variance even with the lowest estimate of Christianity. Some of these were marked out for public punishment in the laws of the different states; but many more are entered in the penitentiaries and ecclesiastical laws among the crimes to be atoned for by that spiritual punishment which the penitence of the offender was made to inflict upon himself. Hence to us these penitentiaries and laws are the most valuable authorities for the early history of the popular superstitions. The Anglo-Saxon penitentiaries, in particular, are full of curious details of this nature, whether we find them written in the Latin or in the vernacular tongue, in both of which they are tolerably abundant. A few specimens may amuse some of our readers, both from their connexion with the subject of which we are speaking, and from the curious manner in which the punishments are doled out. We prefer giving

them from inedited sources. In a valuable Penitentiary, printed in a collection of Anglo-Saxon remains not yet published,* are, among others, the following notices:—

"If any man destroy another by witchcraft, let him fast seven years; three on bread and water, and, during the other four, three days a week on bread and water."

"If any one observe lots, or divination; or keep his wake (watch) at any wells, or at any other created things, except at God's church; let him fast three years, the first on bread and water, and the other two, on Wednesdays and Fridays, on bread and water; and the other days let him eat his meat, but without flesh."†

"The same for a woman who useth any witchcraft to her child, or who draws it through the earth at the meeting of roads, because that is great heathenness."

"If a mouse fall into liquor, let it be taken out, and sprinkle the liquor with holy-water, and, if it be alive, the liquor may be used, but if it be dead, throw the liquor out and cleanse the vessel."

"He who uses any thing that a dog or mouse has eaten of, or a weasel polluted, if he do it knowingly, let him sing a hundred psalms; and if he know it not, let him sing fifty psalms."

"He who gives to others the liquor that a mouse or weasel has been drowned in, if he be a layman, let him

* By the Record Commission in the volume containing the poetry of the Vercelli MS.

† Gyf hwa hlytas oððe hwatunga bega; oððe his wæccean æt ænigum wylle hæbbe, oððe æt ænigre oþre ge-sceafte butan æt Godes cyricean; fæste he III. gear, þæt an on hlafe and on wætere, and þa twa on Wodnes-dagum and Frige-dagum on hlafe and on watere, and þa oðre dagas bruce his metes butan flæsce anum.

fast three days ; if he be a churchman, let him sing three hundred psalms. And if he did it without his knowledge, but afterwards knew it, let him sing the psalter."

In a Saxon homily against witchcraft and magic, preserved in the public library of the University of Cambridge, we have several notices of the *heathen* superstitions of our forefathers, at a comparatively short distance of time from their conversion. "We are ashamed," says the writer, "to tell all the scandalous divinations that every man useth through the devil's teaching, either in taking a wife, or in going a journey, or in brewing, or at the asking of something when he begins anything, or when anything is born to him."* And again, "Some men are so blind, that they bring their offerings to immoveable rocks, and also to trees, and to wells, as witches teach, and will not understand how foolishly they do, or how the lifeless stone or the dumb tree may help them, or heal them, when they themselves never stir from the place."† "Moreover," he goes on to say, "many a silly woman goes to the meeting of ways, and draweth her child through the earth, and so gives to the devil both herself and her offspring."‡ In fact, as the

* Us sceameð to secganne ealle ða sceandlican wiglunga þe ge-hwæs menn drifað, þurh deofles lare, oððe on wifunge, oððe on wadunge, oððe on brywlace, oþþe gif hí man hwæs bitt þonne hí hwæt onginnað. oþþe hí hwæt bið accenned. (*MS. Bibl. Pub. Camb.* Ii, 1, 33, fol. 395.

† Sume men synd swa ablende þæt hí bringað heora lác to eorðfæstum stanum, and eac to treowum, and to wyl-springum, swa swa wiccan tæcað, and nellað understandan hu stuntlice hí doð, oððe hu ðe deade stán oððe þæt dumbe treow him mage ge-helpan, oððe hæle for-gifan, þonne hí sylfe ne a-styriað of þære stowe næfre. (*Ib.* fol. 396.)

‡ Éac sume ge-witlease wif farað to wega ge-lætum, and teoð heora

same early writer observes, "Every one who trusts in divinations either by fowls, or by sneezings, or by horses, or by dogs, he is no Christian, but a notorious apostate."* Among the many Latin penitentialia in the British Museum, there is one which is very full in its enumeration of such offences against "Christendom," although it seems that many of them were criminal chiefly when committed by a priest or monk. Amongst other offenders are here enumerated,—

"He who endeavours by any incantation or magic to take away the stores of milk, or honey, or other things belonging to another, and to acquire them himself.

"He who, deceived by the illusion of hobgoblins, believes and confesses that he goes or rides in the company of her whom the foolish peasantry call Herodias or Diana, and with immense multitude, and that he obeys her commands.

"He who prepares with three knives in the company of persons, that they may predestine happiness to children who are going to be born there.

"He who makes his offering to a tree, or to water, or to any thing, except a church.

"They who follow the custom of the pagans in inquiring into the future by magical incantations on the first of January, or begin works on that day, as though they would on that account prosper better the whole year.

"They who make ligatures or incantations and various

cild þurh ða eorðan, and swa deofle be-tæcað hí sylfe and heora bearn. (*Ib.*)

* Eall swa ge-lice ðe þe ge-lyfð wiglungum oððe be fugelum, oððe be fnórum, oððe be horsum, oððe be hundum, ne bið he na Cristen ac bið for-cuð wiðer-saca. (*Ib.* fol. 394.)

fascinations with magical charms, and hide them in the grass, or in a tree, or in the path, for the preservation of their cattle.

"He who places his child on the roof or in a furnace for the recovery of his health, or for this purpose uses any charms, or characters, or magical figment, or any art, unless it be holy prayers, or the liberal art of medicine.

"He who shall say any charm in the collecting of medicinal herbs, except such as the paternoster and the credo."

Many of the customs alluded to in the foregoing extracts may be traced, under different forms, nearly up to the present day; and none more so than well-worship, some of the ceremonies of which are still performed in different parts of our island. We are tempted to point out two inedited allusions to this latter branch of popular superstition, which we think extremely curious. When the Saxon hero, Hereward, was holding so bravely the marshes of Ely against the Norman Conqueror, he one day repaired in disguise to William's court, and before presenting himself there, passed the night in a cottage in the town where the court was then held. It happened that at the same time there resided in the cottage a noted witch, who was employed by the king to daunt the courage of Hereward's soldiers by her incantations. Being disturbed at midnight by hearing the witch in conversation with his hostess, he followed them into the garden. They repaired to a fountain of water which flowed towards the east, and there he heard them holding converse with the spirit of the fountain.* In the following rather humorous song, pre-

* Porro in medio noctis silentio illas ad fontes aquarum in orientem affluentes juxta [h]ortum domus etam (*sic*) egressas Herwardus percepit. Quas statim secutus est, ubi eas eminus colloquentes audivit,

served in a manuscript at Cambridge, written in the earlier part of the fifteenth century, we have an allusion by name to the ceremony of *waking the well,* mentioned before in the Anglo-Saxon Penitentiary.

I have forsworne hit, whil I life, to wake the well.

"The last tyme I the wel woke,
Sir Johan caght me with a croke,
He made me to swere be bel and boke
I shuld not tell.

Yet he did me a wel worse turne,
He layde my hed agayn the burne,*
He gafe my maydenhed a spurne,
And refe my bell.

Sir John came to oure hows to play,
Fro evensong tyme til light of the day
We made as mery as flowres in May,
I was so gyled.

Sir John he came to our hows,
He made it wonder copious,
He seyd that I was gracious
To beyre a child.

I go with childe, wel I wot;
I schrew the fader that hit gate,
Withowten he fynde hit mylke and pape
A long while ey.†

nescio a quo custode fontium responsa et interrogantes et sui expectantes. (*De Gestis Herwardi Saxonis.*)

* *Burne,* towards the stream—*refe,* stole—*copious,* came frequently —*schrew,* I curse.

† MS. Pub. Lib. Camb. Ff. 5, 48.

If we believe the satirical writings of the reformers, the ceremonies attendant on the popular superstitions had frequently a similar *dénouement* to that which in the present instance followed the *waking of the well.*

Not only were the popular superstitions of our pagan forefathers preserved in their full force, after the introduction of Christianity, from the circumstance of their having considerable influence over the minds of the monks themselves; but the first missionaries, by adopting many of the objects and places of former worship, in the hope of turning more readily the piety of their converts along with them into another direction, and sometimes in the pride of showing how the new religion had seated itself in the very strongholds of idolatry, were the cause of preserving, in the traditions of the people, many legends and articles of former belief, which otherwise would have perished with the objects to which they had been linked. Our extracts have afforded us several proofs how general was the worship of trees; they were looked upon originally as the temple of the object, and not as the object, of worship. Every body who pays any attention to the subject, knows how commonly, even at the present time, legends and popular traditions of the most grotesque description are connected with trees that are venerable for their age and magnitude. Numerous notices in early writers, the greater part of which will be found collected in Grimm's *Mythologie*, shows us, that in the earlier ages of western paganism such trees were universally the objects of superstitious reverence. When St. Boniface, sometime between the years 725 and 731, and during the reign of Charles Martel, visited the Hessians, he found that, though the greater number of them had embraced the Christian faith, there were still

many who followed their old idolatry. Boniface was determined to do all he could to root out heathendom, and, by the advice of the converted Hessians, he resolved on cutting down "an oak of wonderful magnitude" which stood in a place called Gaesmere (Geismar), and to which their pagan forefathers had given, in their language, a name which signified the *oak of Jupiter* (Thor's Oak?).* The work of felling this vast tree was commenced in presence of an immense crowd of spectators, many of them pagans, who believed that their oak would be proof against the power of the axe, and who seemed to regard this trial as a test of the superiority of the one religion over the other. But the oak of Jupiter bowed and fell with a terrible crash, and hundreds of its worshippers became Christians on the spot. Thereupon Boniface, by the advice of his companions, cut up the sacred tree, and with the timber built an oratory on the spot, which he dedicated to Saint Peter. The life of St. Amandus, A. D. 674, speaks of trees dedicated to demons (*arbores quæ erant dæmonibus dedicatæ.*)

In like manner, it was a very common thing to place a Christian church on the same spot where had stood a temple dedicated to some one of the German divinities.

Besides these causes of the preservation of traces of the earlier Teutonic mythology, the language itself, in all its dialects and varieties, at every step bears marks of the original creed of the people who spoke it, not only in the names of the different mythic beings and of their habitation

* Quorum consultu atque consilio *arborem* quandam *miræ magnitudinis*, quæ *prisco paganorum vocabulo* appellatur *robur Jovis*, in loco qui dicitur Gaesmære. (*Vita Bonfac. ap. Grimm*, p. 44.)

and worship, but in multitudes of expressions and terms applied at a later period to other objects and actions, which by their formation show how, at an early period, those objects and actions were connected with the popular culture. These are found more particularly in the names of plants and diseases, and of some animals, and in the apparently unmeaning formulæ which, at a much later period, ignorant people used as magical charms. Grimm has given several popular rhymes in vogue among the peasantry of different parts of Germany, in which are found the names of Woden and Irmen. The names of the Teutonic gods are still preserved in those of the days of the week.

The information which these different authorities afford us concerning the early forms of Teutonic mythology, is tolerably copious, but at the same time so unconnected and vague, that it required all the industry and genius of a Grimm to reduce it to order, and to elicit from it the outline and the details of a system. The materials of an early date come chiefly through the hands of those who seized most readily on the terrific and disagreeable points of the popular mythology. They do not make us acquainted with the more harmless elves and fairies, although there are sufficient traces of them to take away all doubt of their having formed a part of the creed of our forefathers at this remote period. The elves and dwarfs are frequently alluded to in the legends of the Anglo-Saxon saints; and, though they are much disguised under the name of devils, or rather of hobgoblins, yet there are good reasons for believing that from this period to the time when it becomes more perfectly known to us, in this particular the popular belief had not altered. The *white ladies* are mentioned in the Life of Hereward, already quoted, and

in such a manner as to leave little doubt on our minds of their having been identical with the fairies of later times.

The latter half of the twelfth century and beginning of the thirteenth was the period when the feudal barons possessed the greatest power. It seems also to have been the age when literature was most patronized, and the writings which it has left us, whether in prose or verse, in Latin or Anglo-Norman, (for those were the two languages in which people wrote,) show more spirit, elegance, and imagination, than at any other period of the middle ages. The chronicles at this period become far more interesting than they had been before: there is more life and anecdote in them; and, curiously enough, they abound in fairy legends. What makes them still more valuable is, that these legends are evidently given as told by the peasantry, without any, or at least with very little, adventitious colouring. In Gervase of Tilbury, Giraldus Cambrensis, William of Newbury, and Walter Mapes, we have the elves and fairies in all their frolicsome airiness and in all their glory, and we trace them in their dances and gambols by moonlight in their under-ground country, and in their interference in the affairs of men. From this time the documents of the history of popular mythology are more abundant, and appear in multifarious shapes, like the superstitions to which they relate. Strange it is that so many centuries after the abolition of paganism, these superstitions, so intimately grounded upon it, should still keep their hold on people's minds so firmly as from time to time to give even a character to the age. At one time they turned the philosopher into a magician, and led the scholar in wilder vagaries after the philosopher's stone and elixirs than ever Robin Goodfellow put upon the benighted traveller. At a

still later period of European history, when education had been much more widely spread, in the great cry against witchcraft, these superstitions drenched England, as well as France and Germany, in torrents of blood. When we see that at that period the learning which had been so widely spread only served to defend the popular belief, we shall easily perceive how impossible it was for the primitive missionaries to eradicate it from the minds of their converts.

In the earlier ages of Christianity among the Teutonic people, the monks supposed that the elves and fairies of the people were neither more nor less than so many devils, whose business it was to delude people; so that in transmitting to us the outlines of the popular legends they give them a colouring of which it is not always easy to divest them. At later periods, without going so far as to make them absolutely devils, some of the most intelligent writers had very curious ideas about their origin. Giraldus tells us of a fairy who lived some years with a northern bishop as a faithful servant. Before he left the service of his master, he told him who and what he was. He said that the elves and fairies were a portion of the angels who fell with Lucifer from Heaven; but inasmuch as, though they had been seduced and deluded, they were not so criminal as their fellows, their sentence had been less severe: they were allowed to live on the earth, some of them having their peculiar dwelling-place in the air, others in the waters, some again in trees and fountains, and many in the caverns of the earth. He confessed, also, that as Christianity spread, they had much less liberty than formerly. As much of the popular middle-age legends relating to the fall of the angels was probably rooted on the older mythology, this story may itself be the shadow

of an earlier article of pagan creed relating to the origin of the elves.

At the same time, as the monks exerted an influence over the superstitions of the people, in modifying them into apparent accordance with Christianity, these superstitions were also influencing the latter, and without doubt gave rise to that multiplicity and multiformity of demoniacal agency which pervades the monkish legends. In their system the whole world was believed to be peopled with innumerable hordes of devils, who possessed only a certain degree of power, which they used in tormenting, seducing, and misleading mankind. Diseases were often the effect of their malignity, and conflagrations and numerous fatal accidents were commonly supposed to be brought about by their agency. They also exerted an influence over the elements, and caused storms, floods, and even greater convulsions of nature. The monks sometimes invented strange stories to account for the influence which the devils thus exerted, because they were not aware of the real source from which they had been adopted. An inedited English poet of the thirteenth century, after explaining in a popular manner the nature of thunder and lightning, proceeds to show how it happens to cause so much mischief. "When Christ suffered death," says he, "he bound the devil, and broke down hell-gates in order to let out those who suffered there. His visit was attended with such terrible thunder, that the devils have been afraid of thunder ever since; and if any of them happen to be caught in a storm, they fly, as quick as wind, and kill men and destroy trees, &c., which they meet in their way. This is the reason that people are killed in a storm."

We give the passage for the sake of its quaintness—

"Ye mowe sigge whan thundre is menging of fur and wete,
Hou is that hit quelleth men by weyes and bi strete,
And smyt adoun grete treow, and doth meni other wonder?
Therfore ic mot you telle more of the cunde of thunder.
Tho oure Loverd an urthe tholede deth, the devel he bond aleu,
And debrusede helle gates, with thundre thider he com:
Therfore ever eft afterward wher so develen beo,
Of thundre hi beoth so sore agast that hi nute whoder fleo,
And sleth men bi the wey as hi fleoth, as me may ofte i-seo
That moche fere hem geve God that he the worse ne beo."

(*MS. Harl.* No. 2277, fol. 129.)

As we have just observed, it required all the masterly skill of a Grimm to reduce the scattered and often apparently discordant materials which such authorities have left us for the history of the mythology of the Teutonic tribes, into order and system; to show their analogies and connexions with each other; to snatch facts from beneath the adventitious garb which time and error had given them; to make ceremonies and superstitions of a later period guide back to the substance of which they are only the shadow. This is what James Grimm has undertaken, and he has done it completely and satisfactorily. His *Deutsche Mythologie* is a store-house of facts and of discoveries relative to every part of this curious subject.

The first eleven chapters (something more than 200 pages of the book) are devoted to that branch of the subject which, with the exceptions of a few stray traces, belonged more exclusively to the period when Paganism reigned undisturbed over the minds of our forefathers. They treat of the gods and goddesses, of their temples, their priests, and their worship. One of these, *Irmin*, the Eormen of the Anglo-Saxons, the same name that the

Romans called Arminius, has an important connexion with our own national antiquities. Like the other names of the Saxon gods and heroes, that of Eormen is very frequently used in composition in the proper names of our forefathers, as *Eormenræd, Eormenburh, Eormenhild,* &c. As early as the time of Tacitus, a German name was *Hermunduri.* We have met with an instance where an Anglo-Saxon prince gave to all his four daughters names beginning with *Eormen.* It is also found in composition in the names of plants, &c. as *Eormen-leaf,* a name found in one of the old glosses for the *malva-erratica.* The head seat of the worship of this god was the district about Lower Saxony, where his name was in modern times preserved in nursery rhymes, as, for example, the following, which is peculiar to Saxon Hesse:

"*Hèrmen,* sla dermen,
Sla pipen, sla trummen,
De kaiser wil kummen
Met hamer und stangen
Will *Hermen* uphangen." (*Grimm,* p. 211.)

"*Hermen,* strike harp,
Strike pipe and strike drum,
For the emperor is coming
With hammer and staff,
Will hang *Hermen* up."

Grimm thinks, with much probability, that this rhyme is part of some old song on the destruction of the great temple of Irmen (the Irmenseule), by the Frankish emperor Charles. What, however, is the most interesting to us, is the circumstance that the name is given to one of our great ancient roads, the *Erming-street* (which Somner very

absurdly derives from *Here-man-stræt*, via strata militaris.) It also seems probable that the name of another of these great ways, the *Watling-street*, has a similar derivation. And, which is particularly curious, the same name of *Watling-street* was formerly given to the milky way.

"Chaucer (*House of Fame*, 2, 427) describing that region of the heavens, says :—

> "Lo there (quod he), cast up thine eye,
> Se yonder, lo, the galaxie,
> The whiche men clepe the milky way,
> For it is white; and some, par-fay,
> Y-callin it han *Watlingestrete*,
> That onis was brente with the hete,
> Whan that the sunnis sonne the rede,
> Which that hite Phaeton, wolde lede
> Algate his fathirs carte and gie."

"In the *Complaynt of Scotland*, p. 90, it is said of the comet: 'it aperis oft in the quhyt circle, callit *circulus lacteus*, the quhilk the marinalis callis *Vatlantstreit*.' In the Virgil of Gawin Douglas, p. 85 :

> "Of every sterne the twynkling notis he,
> That in the still hevin move cours we se,
> Arthurys house, and Hyades, betaikning rane,
> *Watlingstrete*, the Horne, and the Charlewane,
> The feirs Orion with his golden glave."

"Wætlinga is the gen. pl.; who the *Wætlingas* were, Low they came to give their name to a street in earth and heaven, we know not. Chaucer, who could perhaps have told us, chose rather to introduce the Grecian legend of Phaeton." (*Grimm*, p. 213, 214.) We may observe that Florence of Worcester, who lived at the end of the eleventh

and beginning of the twelfth centuries, interprets it as "the street of the sons of king Wætla," who were its legendary founders.* Wætla was perhaps one of the Saxon mythic heroes.

In his twelfth and thirteenth chapters, Grimm carries us through the families of the white women, wood nymphs, fairies, and the wights and elves, and dwarfs, nickers and kobolds, in all their shapes and varieties. Most of our readers will have learnt, that in the transformation of the elves and fairies of our forefathers into devils, by the monkish legends, the names were sometimes retained, and very curiously applied. Our popular name for the evil one, *Old Nick*, is a word of this class. The *nickers* held a conspicuous place in German romance and story—they are frequently spoken of in the Anglo-Saxon poem of *Beowulf*. They were water fairies, and dwelt in the lakes and rivers, as well as in the sea. So late as the fifteenth century, a MS. dictionary in English and Latin explains *nicker* by 'sirena.' At present, in our island, the word is only preserved in the name of the devil, *Old Nick*. The fourteenth chapter of the Mythologie treats of the giants both of ancient romance and of more modern popular fiction. The fifteenth chapter treats of the elements, and of the superstitions connected with them and the invisible beings who were supposed to live in and rule them.

The sixteenth chapter of this interesting book lays before us the popular superstitions concerning trees and animals. Among quadrupeds, those which were chiefly regarded in a

* Omnis populus qui habitabat in septentrionali plaga Weatlinga-streatæ, id est strata quam filii Weatlæ regis ab orientali mare usque ad occidentale per Angliam straverunt. *Flor. Wig. Chron.* sub. an. 1913.

superstitious light, were horses, bears, and wolves, and sometimes foxes. Among birds, none has been so famous in all ages as the *cuckoo*. But in the Teutonic mythology this bird was not, as at present, the emblem of conjugal infidelity; it played a far different part. It was, and in some parts is still, the universal belief, that if any body noted the number of times the cuckoo repeated its note the first time he heard it in the spring, it would tell him the number of years he had to live. We believe that a similar superstition exists in some parts of England. We find a rhyme in most of the German dialects to this purpose. Thus in Lower Saxony they say—

"*Kukuk* vam häven,
wo lange sall ik leven?"

In other parts of Germany they say,

"*Kukuk*, beckenknecht,
sag mir recht,
wie viel jahr ich leben soll?"

In Sweden the rhyme is,

"Gök gök, silt på quist,
säg mig vist,
hur många år
jag ogift går?'

The same superstition was prevalent in Poland and Bohemia. In one of the old French poems of the cycle of Renard the Fox, we have an allusion to it as existing in France in the thirteenth century. Cæsar of Heisterbach tells a story, which occurred about A.D. 1221, of a man

who, to save his soul, was on the point of entering a monastery and becoming a monk, but on his way there he chanced to hear the cuckoo for the first time. He stopped to count the number of repetitions, and finding them to be twenty-two, "Oh!" said he, "since I shall be sure to live twenty-two years, what is the use of mortifying myself in a monastery all that time? I'll e'en go and live merrily for twenty years, and it will be all in good time to betake me to a monastery for the other two." And so saying, he went his way.

The seventeenth chapter treats of heaven and the stars, and all things belonging thereunto; the eighteenth, of day and night, winter and summer, times and seasons, and the superstitions connected with particular days; the twentieth, of the world, hell, the day of judgment, &c.; the twenty-first, of the soul; the twenty-second, of death; the next, of fortune and fate. The twenty-fourth chapter brings before us the fertile subject of spectres, and the numerous personages of this class who appear in the German *Kinder und Haus-Märchen*. The twenty-fifth chapter treats of the stories of people who have been carried away by the fairies, and of hidden treasures, as well as of the dragons who guard them. The subject of the next chapter is the devil. The twenty-seventh is a long chapter on magic, and witchcraft, and charms. The twenty-eighth chapter is devoted to miscellaneous superstitions, which could not be arranged under any of the former heads; and the twenty-ninth and last, to superstitions connected with diseases and their cures. A large supplement contains numerous documents illustrative of the popular superstitions described in the latter chapters of the book, many of which, we believe, were brought together after the text was printed.

ESSAY VIII.

ON THE NATIONAL FAIRY MYTHOLOGY OF ENGLAND.

THE memorials of the days of Anglo-Saxon heathendom are unfortunately few. The only work which we can ascribe with any degree of certainty to so early a period of their history, or rather of the history of their forefathers before they came here, is the poem of *Beowulf*, of which an edition has been given by Mr. Kemble; and this poem has been much interpolated by Christian transcribers before it was reduced to the state in which it has come down to us. The chief exploit of the hero, Beowulf the Geat, is the destruction of the two monsters Grendel and his mother; both, like most of the evil beings of old times, dwellers in the fens and waters; and both, moreover, as some Christian bard has taken care to inform us, of "Cain's kin," as were also the eotens, and the elves, and the orcs (eótenas, and ylfe, and orcneas). The haunt of the Grendels was a lake in the middle of a dark and dreary morass; it was overshadowed by the thick branches of an ancient wood, and by night the surface of its waters appeared covered with flame (v. 2714.)

"Híe dygel lond
warigeaþ, wulf-hleóþu,
windige næssas,
frecne fen-ge-lád;
þær fyrgen-streám
under næssa ge-nipu
niþer-ge-wíteþ,
flód under foldan.
Nis þæt feor heonon
mil ge-mearces
þæt se mere standeþ,
ofer þæm hongiaþ
hrinde-bearwas,
wudu wyrtum fæst
wæter ofer-helmaþ.
þær mæg nihta ge-hwæn
níþ-wundor seón,
fyr on flóde."

"They keep the secret land,
the refuges of the wolf,
the windy promontories,
the fearful path of the fen;
there where the mountain-stream
under the darkness of the promontories
rushes downwards—
the flood under the earth.
It is not hence [from Heorot]
a mile distant
where that lake standeth,
over which hang
the rinded thickets,
the wood fast with its roots
overhangeth the water.
There by night to any one
an evil wonder appears,
fire on the flood."

When, after the death of the son, Beowulf and his companions pursued the mother into her retreat, they found the water full of sea-drakes and serpents (wyrm-cynnes fela) and nicers lying on the banks. To Beowulf these were no new antagonists; in one of his exploits by sea, the nicers—for there were nicers in the sea as well as in the lakes—had, during a storm, dragged him out of his boat, and carried him to the bottom, where the desperate struggle between them ended with the death of nine of his opponents. We learn little from the poem of the form, or magnitude, or nature of these "heathen beasts," as they are called, except that against them weapons, the works of men, were useless; and Beowulf's sword, when it touched the Grendel's blood, melted like ice (íse ge-licost.)

The last exploit of Beowulf was against another personage of the fairy mythology, a dragon, or fire-drake, that sat brooding over his heaps of treasures of the olden days. During the slumber of its guardian, the "heathen hoard" had been plundered; and when the fire-drake awoke, and discovered that the object of his cares had been visited, he paced furiously about the entrance of his den, in search of the intruder He then returned to ascertain the extent of his loss, and at night he issued forth, and in revenge spread devastation through the country. The house of the dragon was a tumulus under a mountain near the waves of the sea.

"Hlæw under hrusan,
holm wylme neh,
yð gewinne."

When the surviving conqueror, the companion of Beowulf, who was mortally wounded in the combat, entered it (v. 5508.),—

"Ge-seah ðá síge-hreðig
. . . . .
máððum sigla feola,
gold glitmian
grunde ge-tenge,
wundur on wealle;
and þæs wyrmes denn,
ealdes uht-flogan,
orcas stondan,
fyrn-manna fatu
feormend-leáse,
hyrstum be-hrórene:
þær wæs helm mónig
eald and ómig,

"He, exulting in victory, saw there
. . . . . .
a multitude of costly gems,
gold glittering
heavy upon the ground,
a wonder on the wall:
and in the den of the dragon—
the old flier in the twilight—
platters standing,
the vessels of men of old
no longer living,
fretted with ornaments:
there was many a helmet
old and rusty,

earm-beága fela	many an armlet
Searwum ge-sæled.	skilfully bound together.
. . . .	. . . . .
Swylce he siomian ge-seah	So also he saw raised there
segn eall gylden,	an ensign, all of gold,
heáh ofer horde,	high over the hoard,
hond-wundra mæst,	the most wonderful of handy works,
ge-locan Ɫéoðu-cræftum;	locked together by magic arts;
of ðam leóman stód,	from which the light shone forth,
þæt he ðone grund-wong	so that he might scrutinise
ongitan meahte."	the whole bottom of the cave."

Popular superstitions are not easily removed; and with the introduction of Christianity, the Anglo-Saxons did not cease to believe in the existence and operations of the elves and the nicers, the orcs and the giants; nor did they cease to trust in the effects of charms and incantations, or to revere wells and fountains. The preachers of the faith of their Redeemer saw nothing in that faith which was contrary to the belief which they had sucked in even with their mother's milk; for though it asserted the unity of God, yet it did not deny the existence of spirits. It was impossible, however, that so great a change should be made as the total subversion of the previously established religion of a country, without affecting in some measure even the superstitions of the peasant; and we find, accordingly, that the Christian Anglo-Saxons tried to account for the existence of these beings in a way very different from that of their Pagan forefathers. They attempted to rationalise the belief in the elves which they found already established; and they defined their pedigrees and functions, and limited their powers, on principles which varied according to the proportion wherein Christianity or heathendom ruled in

their minds. Hence we hear at one time of the elfin descendants of the first murderer, Cain, who were fated to wander over the wastes and fens, the terror and scourge of mankind; at another, of the spirits unworthy of heaven, yet too good for hell, who were allowed or compelled to inhabit the air, and the water, and the earth. Just the same influence did Mahommedanism exert on the popular creed of the easterns—the beings with which it had peopled water and earth and air became a race of Peris, beautiful, and to a certain degree happy, and permitted even to approach the gates of paradise and to behold the joys within, joys which they could only hope to partake of after ages of penitence.

The belief of the monks themselves in these spirits will account for the silence with which they are passed over in the homilies and religious discourses of the time. When they preached against heathendom, instead of attacking the superstitions of their countrymen, they broke out into declamations against the heathen practices of the Greeks and Romans. A manuscript homily, bearing the inviting title *De falsis diis*, told us much about Saturn, and Jupiter, and Venus, and their evil deeds, but of elves and nicers not a word. Another homily in the same collection is directed against witchcraft and magic, a title more tempting even than the former. We learn from it much about the witch of Endor, but of native superstitions we find only a few short and scattered notices, which have been given in our Essay on Grimm's Mythology.

The monks, however, were not content with giving a different account of the origin and nature of the elves, but they at once transformed them into devils, whose business it was to plague and tempt frail mortality. They moreover

adopted the popular stories, and turned them into saints' legends; and a more extensive knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon fairies may perhaps be gathered by a careful perusal of the legends of the Anglo-Saxon saints, than all the other books together can afford us. It only need be borne in mind, that in the transformation the elves, when mischievously inclined, became devils; when beneficent, angels. The fens and wilds are in Beowulf constantly peopled by troops of elves and nicers and worms (dragons and serpents). So in the saints' legends are they ever the haunts of hobgoblins (*dæmones*); and many and fierce were the struggles between them and the hermits, before the latter succeeded in establishing themselves in their deserted abodes. St. Guthlac built him a mud-cot in the isle of Croyland, a wild spot, then covered with woods and pools and sedgy marshes. The isle had hitherto been uninhabited by men; but many a goblin played among its solitudes, and very unwilling were they to be driven out. They came upon him in a body, dragged him from his cell, sometimes tossed him in the air, at others dipped him over head in the bogs, and then tore him through the midst of the brambles; but their efforts were vain against one who was armed like Guthlac, for he carried to the combat "*scutum fidei, loricam spei, galeam castitatis, arcum pœnitentiæ, sagittas psalmodiæ.*" St. Botolf chose for his residence Ykanho, a place not less wild and solitary than Croyland itself, which had hitherto, his historian tells us, been only the scene of the "fantastic illusion" (faery, we might say) of the goblins, now to be banished by the intrusion of the holy recluse.* At his first appearance they

* The place chosen by Botulf, and its inhabitants, are thus described

attempted to scare him with horrid noises; but finding him proof against their attacks (for he was not worse armed than Guthlac), they endeavoured to move him by persuasive expostulations. "A long time," they said, "we have possessed this spot, and we had hoped to dwell in it for ever. Why, cruel Botulf, dost thou forcibly drive us from our haunts? Thee or thine we have neither injured nor disturbed. What seekest thou by dislodging us? and what wilt thou gain by our expulsion? When we are already driven from every other corner of the world, thou wilt not let us stay quietly even in this solitude." Botulf made the sign of the cross, and the elves and nicers departed.

Sometimes these goblins were more obliging towards their new neighbours, and directed them where to dig for treasures; though it appears that they seldom gained much by seeking after "heathen gold." Godric, at a much later period, occupied a cell in the wilds of Durham, and was often troubled by these spiritual enemies. On a time, however, one of them appeared by night, and told him where he would find a hidden hoard. Godric was not, it appears, an avaricious man; but he thought he might do some good with the money which was thus revealed to him, and to work he went with pickaxe and shovel. When, however, he had dug a considerable depth—though we are

in the legends of saints in English verse; of which there is a good old MS. in the library of Trin. Coll., Cant.:

"A stede ther was in wyldernysse, that me clyped Thorje eyje,
That ful was of luther thynges, the men this by-seye,
For develen and luther gostes here eyse hadde ther,
And her wonynge al at wylle, for non men ther nere."

not told that he obtained a sight of the promised treasure—he was terror-struck by seeing come out of the hole a troop of small black dwarfs, who, with a laugh of derision, cast at him little smoking balls. Godric dropped his shovel, and, it is almost needless to add, never sought treasures again. Among others, the following anecdote is related of Godric's encounters with the spirits. It must be premised that Godric had a garden before his cell, which was on the banks of the Wear, and which it was his daily labour to tend. Once when, weary with digging, he had stopped to rest himself, a strange man suddenly made his appearance, and looked earnestly at the saint for some time. Then he spoke, and accused the good saint of idleness, and told him that he did not work half so hard as the saints of former times used to work. The saint, who at first thought it had been a messenger of God sent to instruct him in his duty, answered, "Do you then first set me an example." And he gave him the spade, and left him, for it was then his customary hour of devotion, and he promised to return soon and see how much work he had done. The strange man took the spade, and worked, says the legend, most vigorously; and when Godric returned, he was astonished to find that in the space of an hour his new labourer had dug as much ground as he himself could dig in eight days. "There," said the stranger, "that is the way to work." But Godric was frightened, for he was now sure that it could not be a real man; and indeed appearances were much against him, for he was dark and hairy, and somewhat tall; and, which appeared oddest of all, though he had worked so hard, yet he showed no signs of weariness, and did not even sweat. Then Godric went to his cell, and concealed a little book in his bosom, and returned and said,

"Now tell me who thou art, and why thou hast come here?" "Do you not see that I am a man like yourself?" was the answer. "Then," said Godric, "if you are a man, tell me if you believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and join with me in adoring the Mother of our Lord." But the goblin said, for a goblin it was sure enough, "Be not solicitous about my belief, for it is no concern of yours." Godric now became more suspicious than before; he took the book out of his bosom—it contained pictures of our Lord and of the Virgin and of St. John—and he placed it suddenly against the other's mouth, telling him if he believed in God to kiss it devoutly; on which the goblin laughed at him and vanished. Godric, like a pious man, watered with holy water the ground which had thus been dug, and let it lie uncultivated for seven years.

Some may think, perhaps, that we speak incautiously in talking of elves and nicers, when no such names occur in the writings from which we quote. But here, fortunately, there steps in to our aid an important passage of the poetic Lyamon, which assures us that in the twelfth century elves and *nickers** were as busily employed among the wilds, wherever they had not been driven out by the powerful weapons of the hermits, as they had been even in the time of the heroic Beowulf. In describing a lake in Scotland, he says (MS. Cott. Calig. A. ix. f. 125):

* In the fifteenth century, in the *Promptuarium Parvulorum*, the word nicker still occurs, and is used to explain the classic sirens. It is a singular instance of the tendency of the monks to turn the elves into devils, that this word is now only preserved in the name "Old Nick," which is given to the arch-fiend himself. See before, in our observations on Grimm's German Mythology.

"That is a seolcuth mere,
I-set a middel-ærde,
Mid fenne and mid ræode,
Mid watere swithe brǽde,
Mid fiscen and mid feoȝelen,
Mid univele thingen.
That water is unimete brade;
Nikeres ther bathieth inne;
Ther is alvene ploȝe
In atteliche pole."

"That is a wonderful lake,
Set in middle-earth,
With fen and with reed,
With water very broad,
With fishes and with fowls,
With ugly things.
That water is immeasurably broad;
Nickers bathe therein;
There is play of *elves*
In the venomous pool."

It was an elf, too, which, in Robert of Gloucester, is said to have been the father of the far-famed Merlin; and when king Vortiger inquired of his sages what kind of being it might be, they said (ed. Hearne, p. 130):

"That ther beth in the eir an hey, fer fro the gronde,
As a maner gostes, wyȝtes as it be,
And me may hem ofte on erthe in wylde studes y-se;
And ofte in monnes fourme wymmen heo cometh to,
And ofte in wymmen forme thei cometh to men also,
That men cleputh *elvene*."

For our extensive knowledge of the English fairies of the twelfth century we are indebted chiefly to two writers, Gervase of Tilbury, and the Cambrian Giraldus. The tales which are found in the writings of Giraldus are mostly Welsh; but on that account they are none the less valuable to us, for they enable us to compare the Welsh superstitions of that remote period with the English; and it appears from the comparison that they hardly differed from each other. We are told by Bale and others, that Giraldus was author of a topography and itinerary of England, as well as of Wales and Ireland—a work which would be to us inva-

luable; but we have sought carefully for it in all the manuscript collections where it was supposed to be preserved, and we have been obliged, much against our inclinations, to conclude that, if such a work has been attributed to him on any better grounds than hearsay, now at least it is no longer in existence. From Giraldus and Gervase we can form a very tolerable outline of the popular belief of their age. We have in them not only the spirits which dwelt in the wild woods and the waters, the dragons, too, and the mer-women, but we have also the elves which entered people's houses and carried off the new-born children from their cradles to be denizens of the land of faery; and, which is still more important, we have domestic elves, the dwarfs which laboured zealously in the service of the family to which they had attached themselves, and those "mad-merry" sprites whose joy was in playing mirthful tricks on the deluded peasantry. The stories which lie scattered through the *Otia Imperialia* of Gervase have been told over and over; but Giraldus has not been so well used, and his account of the familiar spirits is exceedingly curious. They made their presence known by throwing dirt and other harmless things at every one they came near; and they continually plagued them by cutting holes in their coats, and playing other such mischievous pranks. Sometimes they would talk with the people of the house; and when displeased or mischievously inclined, they scrupled not to tell in their presence all their secrets and private actions, much to the shame and confusion of many who were so exposed. When any attempt was made to exorcise them, they threw dirt at the priests themselves; and Giraldus thinks, from the inefficiency of the exorcisms of the church in driving them away, that the power of the

priests was only efficient against spirits of a malignant nature. These hobgoblins sometimes appeared visibly; and one in Pembrokeshire, where they were very common, took up his abode in the house of one Elidor Stakepole, in the form of a red boy, who called himself Simon. Master Simon began, "impudently," says our author—by taking the keys from the butler, and usurping his office. However, he was himself so provident a butler, that, while he held the office, everything seemed to prosper. He never waited to be told to do anything; but whatever his master or mistress were thinking of calling for, he brought it immediately, saying, "You want so and so; here it is." Moreover, he knew all about their money and their secret hoards; and often did he upbraid them on that account, for he hated nothing more than avarice, and he could not bear to see money laid up in holes which might be employed in good and charitable uses. There was nothing, on the contrary, he liked better than giving plenty to eat and drink to the rustics; and he used to tell his master, that it was right he should be free in giving to them those things which by their labours he himself obtained. Indeed, Simon was an excellent servant: but he had one failing, he never went to church, and he never uttered a single "Catholic word" (*nec verbum aliquid Catholicum unquam pronunciabat.*) One remarkable thing was, that he never slept in the house at night, though he was always at his post by daybreak. Once, however, he was watched, and found to take up his lodging about the mill and the milldam. The next morning Simon came to his master, delivered up his keys, and left the house, after having filled the post of butler for about forty days. (Girald. Cam. Itin. lib. i, pp. 852-53.)

From the time of Giraldus, we have plenty of materials for a history of the fairy superstitions of our country. The author of the French poem on the deposition of Richard II, of which there is a copy in the Harleian manuscripts (No. 1316), in the prose part of it, accuses the English, among other things, of being given entirely to the belief in prophecies, phantoms, and sorcery ("car il sont de telle nature en leur pays, que en prophecies, en fanthomes et sorceries, croient très parfaitement, et en usent très volentiers.") Accordingly, in the old chronicles, both those which have been published and those which still remain in manuscript, we find many fairy tales introduced among the severer records of actual life. We find there, for instance, stories of those who have at different times had interviews with the illustrious Arthur, where he abode under the influence of faery, exactly parallel to the well-known Kyffhäusen legends of Germany. We will merely notice as we pass on, that in the year 1344, according to Thomas of Walsingham, a certain Saracen physician came to earl Warren to ask of him permission to kill a serpent which was troublesome in his possessions on the Welch marches, at the village of Bromfield. The serpent was overcome by the incantations of the Saracen; but some words which were dropped by the latter led to the suspicion that large treasures lay concealed in the serpent's den. The men of Herefordshire, taking the hint, went by night, at the instigation of a Lombard called Peter Pikard, to dig for the gold; and they had just reached it, when the retainers of the earl Warren, having discovered what was going on, fell suddenly upon them, and put them in prison. The earl, says the historian, was no little gainer by the affair.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, two

circumstances tended to encumber and confuse, in our literature at least, the fairy mythology of England—the introduction of French poetry and of the mythic tales of Greece and Italy. Both these causes acted together in the metrical romances, which formed so large a portion of the poetry of that age. Much of the popular mythology of the French was probably, as we suspect also is the case with that of the Scotch, Welch, and Irish, essentially Teutonic: and Grimm has long ago observed that the Oberon (Aûberon) of French stories is in name and person the Elberich of German poetry. The French, with their poetry, brought into English literature their own popular fairies, as modified in character by the fertile imagination of their poets; and the English imitators of those poets naturally adopted the forms which were thus presented to them. These forms, indeed, were not altogether abhorrent to their own notions; and we cannot suppose they would find much difficulty in accepting, as a tale of their own elves, the lai of Sir Launfal, who were accustomed to listen to the adventures of True Thômas "be Huntley banks," which was altogether an English popular legend. But, even in Sir Launfal itself, we have evidence that the English bards thought they were talking of their own elves, and actually altered and made additions in the circumstantial parts of the story they were translating, in accordance with that notion.

Many of the stories which were current at this period, more perhaps than has generally been supposed, were formed on Grecian and Roman models; and we may point out, as an instance, one of the tales in the *Seven Sages*, printed by Weber, "The Two Dreams," the plot of which is substantially the same as that of the *Miles Gloriosus* of

Plautus. Several of the persons of Grecian mythology at first sight bore a resemblance to the popular elves and fairies; and hence translators both into Anglo-Saxon and into the English of later times, have sometimes used these latter names as a sort of equivalent for them, just as Alfred translates the Roman *sacerdotes* by the Saxon *biscopes*; but it follows no more that those translators considered that the nymphs of Grecian fable were elves and fairies in the strict sense of the word, than that Alfred thought the heathen priests were actually Christian bishops. However, we find instances of Grecian stories adopted as legends of faery; and some medieval poet, having heard the story of Orpheus, who by the power of his lyre rescued his wife from the regions below, took it for a legend of his own fairies, and invented the beautiful little romance of *Orfeo and Herodys*, a poem which in its English dress contains not one incident which is inconsistent with the native mythology; and indeed the writer—the translator we may say, for the form of the names shows that it came from the French—was so certain of this, that he looked over his histories, and discovered that Thrace, which had somehow been retained in the French story, was none other than an old name of the good and ancient city of Winchester, where Sir Orfeo was king.

The mention of Sir Launfal, Sir Orfeo, and Thomas of Ersildoun, naturally brings our mind to the fairy land itself. The consideration of the underground residence of the fairies, as a part of the English mythology, would lead us into long and curious investigations for which now we have not room. The elves have always had a country and dwellings under ground as well as above ground; and in several parts of England the belief that they descended to their subter-

raneous abodes through the barrows which cover the bones of our forefathers of ancient days is still preserved. There were other ways, however, of approaching the elves' country, and one of the most common was by openings in the rocks and caverns, as we find in the poem of Sir Orfeo, and in the tale of Elidurus, told by Giraldus. The great cave of the peak of Derby was also a road thither, and Gervase of Tilbury has preserved a tale how William Peverell's swineherd ventured once to descend it in search of a brood-sow; and how he found beneath a rich and cultivated country, and reapers cutting the corn. The communication, however, has long been stopped up; and those who go now to explore the wonders of the cavern find their progress stayed by the firm impenetrable rock. The stories of this subterranean land underwent the same changes as the other part of the system, and among the monks formed the ground-work of such legends as the visions of Furseus and Drihthelm, and the far-famed purgatory of St. Patrick. The mixture of the monkish with the true mythic stories, is nowhere more conspicuous than in the ballad of "True Thomas," which Mr. Halliwell has printed in his Illustrations of the Fairy Mythology of a Midsummer's Night's Dream. The elf-queen says to Thomas, after having passed a long dreary way under ground,

"Sees thu yonder is fayre way,
That lyes over yonder mounteyne?
Yonder is the way to hëven for ay,
When synful soulis have duryd ther peyne.

Seest thu now, Thomas, yonder way,
That lyse low under yon rise?
Wide is the way, the sothe to say,
Into the joyes of paradyse.

Sees thu yonder thrid way,
That lyes over yonder playne?
Yonder is the way, the sothe to sey,
Ther sinfull soules shalle drye ther payne.

Sees thu now yonder fourt way,
That lyes over yonder felle?
Yonder is the way, the sothe to say,
Unto the brennand fyre of hell.

Spes thu now yonder fayre castell,
That stondis upon yonder fayre hill?
Off towne and toure it berith the bell;
In mydul-erth is ther non like ther-till.

In faith, Thomas, yonder is myne owne,
And the kyngus of this countré."

We now approach a melancholy period in the history of our mythology—a period when the superstitions of the peasant governed the minds of judges and rulers, and at the same time the merciless arm of fanaticism too often wielded the sword of justice. Two superstitions—astrology and witchcraft—have always been found connected with popular mythology. The elves and other spiritual beings were believed to be variously affected by different things and different combinations of things; and certain noises, as the ringing of bells, were sufficient in many instances to drive them away; while even the possession of particular herbs and stones was enough to defend the bodies and properties of men from their depredations. The agate, for instance, among the Anglo-Saxons, had various virtues; if a man had it about his person, or in his house, no fiend could remain there (ne mæg þær-inne feond wesan), and the man who carried it constantly about with him was

proof against all witchcraft and magic arts (þæt dry-cræft þam mon ne dereð þe hine mid him hæfð. Lib. Med. in Bibl. Reg.)—Again, by certain spells, the performance of certain ceremonies, attended by particular combinations of words, the strongest charms which had been worked by means of these spirits might be dissolved. Other things and ceremonies were believed to be so potent as to bind down these spirits, and put them effectually under the disposal of those who possessed or performed them. To know these things, and how to perform these acts, was, as might be expected, the ambition of many; and those who had arrived at that wisdom became magicians and astrologers,—cunning, but sometimes weak and deluded men.

The astrologers made greater transformations in the popular creed than had been effected by any other cause—we of course mean, after astrology had in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries been reduced to an extensive system; for they made new and artificial divisions of the spirits of earth, and air, and water, into tribes and legions, which were placed under thrones and dominations, bearing names such as the ears of the peasant were never accustomed to. Thus we are told in Reginald Scott—to take a few names from among a host—that the spirit *Paymon* is of the power of the air, the sixteenth in the rank of thrones, subordinate to *Corban* and *Marbas*. *Bathin* is of a deeper reach in the source of the fire, the second after Lucifer's familiar, and hath not his fellow for agility and affableness in the whole infernal hierarchy. *Barma* is a mighty potentate of the order of seraphims, whom twenty legions of infernal spirits do obey. The incantation which must bind down these spirits is, as might naturally be expected, a very serious thing; and when, after various ceremonies

performed, they first make their appearance, they address the magician in their own language of course,—"*Git pragma burthon machatan dermah:*" to which the magician must boldly answer, "*Beral, Beroald, Corath, Kermiel,*" and so forth. Good Reginald Scott enlivens the recital of all these formidable proceedings by the following pleasant story of a worthy monk, Sir John, who was desired to utter some most efficient exorcism against the robbers of a miller's wear (p. 150.)

"So it was, that a certain Sir John, with some of his company, once went abroad a jetting, and in a moonlight evening robbed a miller's weir, and stole all his eels. The poor miller made his moan to Sir John himself, who willed him to be quiet; for he would so curse the thief, and all his confederates, with bell, book, and candle, that they should have small joy of their fish. And therefore the next Sunday Sir John got him to the pulpit, with his surplice on his back, and his stole about his neck, and pronounced these words following in the audience of the people:

'All you that have stol'n the miller's eelis,
Laudate dominum de cœlis;
And all they that have consented thereto,
Benedicamus domino.

'Lo,' saith he, 'there is sauce for your eeles, my masters!'"

The following passage of an old writer, whose notions, like that of many of his contemporaries, were moulded in the astrological doctrines of the age, will show sufficiently the connexion between that "science" and the fairy mythology. He is speaking of the different orders and classes of spirits.

"The spirits of the earth keepe for the most part in

forests and woods, and doe hunters much noyance; and sometime in the broad fields, where they leade travellers out of the right way, or fright men with deformed apparitions, or make them run mad through excessive melancholy, like Ajax Telamonius, and so prove hurtful to themselves and dangerous to others . . . . The under-earth spirits are such as lurk in dens and little cavernes of the earth, and hollow crevices of mountaines, that they may dive into the bowels of the earth at their pleasure: these dig metals and watch treasures, which they continually transport from place to place, that none should have use of them: they raise windes that vomit flames, and shake the foundation of buildings: they daunce in rounds in pleasant launds and greene meddowes, with noyses of musick and minstralsie, and vanish away when any comes neere them: they will take upon them eny similitude but of a woman, and terrifie men in the likenes of dead mens ghosts in the night time." (Nashe's *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Deuell*, p. 34.)

Similar ideas are evidently the groundwork of the following spell, from the "History of Friar Bacon," which is printed in Mr. Thoms's *Prose Romances*. The fairies, it must be observed, were always believed to be dwellers in dens, and lakes, and trees; and it was them whom the astrologer conjured into his glass, or crystal, to direct him to the hidden treasures which they only knew.

"Now the owle is flowne abroad,
For I hear the croaking toade;
And the bat that shuns the day
Through the darke doth make her way.
Now the ghostes of men doe rise,
And with fearful hideous cryes,

Seeke revengement (from the goode)
On their heads that spilt their blood.
Come some spirit, quicke! I say,
Night's the devil's holiday;
Where ere you be, in dennes, or lake,
In the ivy, ewe, or brake,
Quickly come, and me attend,
That am Bacon's man and friend."

The witch differed from the astrologer in this, that her power over the spirits was believed to be the result of a compact with the spirit of darkness, whereby he bound himself to serve her for a time, on condition that he should afterwards be her master for ever. The witches were among the peasantry what the astrologer was in rather more refined society, in their intercourse with the spirits. But they had no invention of their own; and there seems to be little room for doubting that the systematic story of their dealings, which we find them made to confess to at their trials, was all put into their mouths by others; and when we do find an instance where, instead of being asked if they believed and had done and seen so and so, the question was, "What had they done or seen?" whatever confession is made may be traced to the fairy superstitions which they had imbibed from their childhood. One new circumstance was brought in with the witchcraft of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—the power of fairies to enter into people, and "possess" them. It is not difficult to see whence and how this notion came, and we might point out a hundred instances of it; but we will only mention one, which seems to have some allusion to the merry and mischievous Puck. It is observed of the celebrated Surey demoniac,—"He stands upon his head, dances upon

his knees, and runs of all fours like a dog, and barks. He seems sometimes extremely heavy, and at other times light, and was thought to be possessed with *a merry ludicrous spirit.*" (Hutchinson's *Hist. Essay on Witchcraft*, p. 125.)

Our space forbids further quotation than one, with which to conclude our short survey of the history of the fairy mythology in England; it is an extract from "A Dialogue concerning Witches and Witchcrafts," written "by George Giffard, minister of God's word in Maldon" (1593).* The dialogue is spiritedly written, and gives a curious view of the popular belief at that time. The interlocutors are Samuel, Daniel, and the wife of Samuel. Samuel and Daniel have met in their walk in the fields.

"*Sam* . . . . These witches, these evill-favoured old witches, doe trouble me?

"*Dan.* What! doe you take yourselfe to be bewitched?

"*Sam.* No, no; I trust no evill spirite can hurt me; but I heare of much harme done by them: they lame men, and kill their cattle; yea, they destroy both men and children. They say there is scarce any towne or village in all this shire, but there is one or two witches at the least in it. In good sooth, I may tell it to you as to my friend, when I goe into my closes I am afraide; for I see now and then a hare, which my conscience giveth me is a witch, or some witches sprite, shee stareth so uppon me. And sometime I see an ugly weasell runne through my yard; and there is a foule great catte sometimes in my barne, which I have no liking unto.

"*Dan.* You never had no hurt done yet, had you, by any witch?

* This book has been reprinted by the Percy Society.

"*Sam.* Trust me, I cannot tell; but I feare me I have: for there be two or three in our towne which I like not, but especially an old woman. I have beene as careful to please her as ever I was to please mine own mother, and to give her ever anon one thing or other; and yet methinkes shee frownes at me now and then. And I had a hogge which eate his meate with his fellowes, and was very well to our thinking over night, and in the morning he was starke dead. My wife hath had five or sixe hennes even of late dead. Some of my neighbours wishe me to burne some thing alive, as a henne or a hogge; others will me in time to seeke helpe at the handes of some cunning man, before I have any further harme. I wold be glad to do for the best.

"*Dan.* Have you any cunning man hereabout that doth helpe?

"*Sam.* There is one, they say here, a-twenty miles off, at T. B., which hath holpe many. And thus much I know, there was one of my acquaintance but two miles hence which had great losses; he lost two or three kine, six hogs (he would not have tooke fifteene shillings a hog for them), and a mare. He went to that same man, and told him hee suspected an old woman in the parish. And I think he told me that he shewed him her in a glasse, and told him shee had three or foure imps—some call them puckrels; one like a gray catte, an other like a weasell, an other like a mouse—a vengeance take them! it is great pitty the countrey is not ridde of them—and told him also what he shoulde doe. It is halfe a yeare agoe, and he never had any hurt since. There is also a woman at R. H., five-and-twenty miles hence, that hath a greate name; and great resort there is dayly unto her. A neighbour of mine had

his childe taken lame, a girle of ten yeares olde, and such a paine in her backe, that she could not sit upright. He went to that woman; she told him he had some badde neighbour—the childe was forespoken, as he had suspected. Marry, if he would goe home, and bring her some of the clothes which the child lay in all night, shee would tell him certainely. He went home, and put a table-napkin about her necke all night, and in the morning tooke it with him; and shee told him the girle was bewitched indeede, and so told him what hee should doe: and he had remedy. The girle is as well at this day, and a pretty quicke girle. There was another of my neighbours had his wife much troubled, and he went to her, and shee told him his wife was haunted with a *fairy*. I cannot tell what she bad him doe, but the woman is merry at this howre. I have heard—I dare not say it is so—that shee weareth about her Saint John's Gospel, or some part of it. . . . If I had heard but of one [cunning person], I should have gone ere this time; and I am glad that I met with you. . . . We have a schoolmaister that is a good prettie scholler, they say, in the Latine tongue, one M. B.; he is gone to my house even now; I pray you let me entreat you to go thither, you two may reason the matter.

"*Dan.* Well, I will goe with you.

"*Sam.* Wife, I have brought an olde friende of mine; I pray thee, bid him welcome.

"*The Wife.* He is verie welcome. But trulie, man, I am angrie with you, and halfe out of patience, that you go not to seek helpe against yonder same olde beast: I have another hen dead this night. Other men can secke remedy. Here is M. B. tells me, that the goode wife R. all the laste weeke could not make her butter come. She never rested

until she got her husbande out to the woman at R. H.; and when he came home, they did but heat a spit red hotte, and thruste into the creame, using certaine wordes that she willed him, and it came as kindly as anie butter that ever she made. I met the olde filth this morning. Lord, how sowerlie she looked upon me! and mumbled as she went: I heard part of her wordes. 'Ah!' quod she, 'you have an honest man to your husband; I heare how he doth use me.' In trueth, husbande, my stomacke did so rise against her, that I could have found in my heart to have flowen upon her and scratched her, but that I feared she would be too strong for me. It is a lustie olde queane."

We will only add that, in looking back to the fairy mythology of former days, it is the more necessary to take into consideration the causes that have produced changes in the form of those superstitions, because our only source of information is the literature of the times, which generally came from those who were most apt to garble the superstitions of their countrymen. In them, therefore, the changes are by far greater and more perceptible than they would be at the same time in their true depositories—the oral legends of the peasant. On the latter, the causes which did effect them would act slowly and gradually; and many of the tales of Gervase and Giraldus may very well be compared with those which we can still gather in the more retired parts of England, where perchance the schoolmaster, who is abroad, has not yet shown his face.

ESSAY IX.

ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF MODERN GREECE.

HILE the fairy mythology of other countries has been largely examined, little attention appears to have been paid to the popular superstitions of Greece, although they afford a curious point of comparison with our own. We have, however, no small store of materials for the subject in a tract of the learned Allatius, published at Cologne in 1645, entitled *Leonis Allatii de Græcorum hodie quorundam opinationibus.*

Allatius was himself a native of Chios, and seems to have been intimately acquainted with the superstitions and legends of his native isle. The Greeks of his time believed the plains and woods to be inhabited by spirits in the likeness of women, whom they called *naragidæ* (ναραγίδαι); a word which Allatius considers to be only a corruption of the older νηρηΐδαι. The spirits themselves, however, had more of the characteristics of Teutonic fairies than Grecian nereids. The peasantry, fearful of offending them by mentioning their real name, spoke of them under the title of the *fair ladies* (καλαὶ ἀρχόντισαι.) They haunted especially shady trees, and might frequently be seen dancing their rounds beside the cool streams which watered the woody dales. They sometimes fell in love with handsome young men, and they were extremely fond of little children,

often carrying them away, and occasionally bringing them back, after having kept them some time; in which case the children were more beautiful than before they were stolen, and were always accompanied by some valuable gifts. The children were sometimes detained and educated amongst them. Many people had seen them, sometimes dancing, at other times, two engaged in converse under the shade of a tree, or one or more wandering about the woods or meadows. A Chian family once went to spend a summer's day in the fields. One of them, a beautiful little girl, wandering from her companions, came to a well which was not far distant, and leaned over the edge to look at the water. Suddenly she seemed to be raised gently from the ground, and drawn into the well. The parents saw the danger of their child, and hastened to the spot, where they were astonished to find her playing upon the surface of the water. The father attempted to go down into the well, but was held back by some unseen force. Others, in the mean time, brought a ladder, by which the father again descended, and succeeded in rescuing his daughter; but, though both had been in the water, not a trace of it could be perceived on either. The child said, that when she looked into the water she saw beautiful women playing on the surface, who took hold of her and pulled her in. These, people said, were the naragidæ, who inhabited the well and the caverns from which the water issued.

Not unfrequently, a person who was in the fields doing anything offensive to the naragidæ was suddenly struck down, and became thenceforth ugly, or crooked, or hump-backed, or lame, or otherwise deformed. This every body agreed in ascribing to the *fair ladies*, who had in particular a great love for cleanliness; but fearful of giving further offence, they avoided directly imputing the accident

to them, but said mysteriously, *ὥρα τὸν ηὗρεν—the hour found him*; or, *ἀπὸ ἔξω ἔχει—he is affected from without.* When a person was preparing to do anything by which he thought he might incur the displeasure of these powerful beings, he generally first spat thrice on the ground; which, if there chanced to be any of the fair ladies in the place, would certainly drive them away, and thus defend him from their anger.

It was the common belief, that when the wind blew in whirls, and the dust arose in columns, the fair ladies were there passing along. These naragidæ seem to have been always noxious beings, except to those with whom they had fallen in love; whom they never failed to make powerful, rich, and fortunate. Michael Psellus, who flourished in the eleventh century, mentions them under the name of the *fair ones of the mountains* (*καλαὶ τῶν ὀρέων.*)

Our readers will not fail to notice the general similitude between these naragidæ and the fairies of our own island. However, we are tempted to quote two passages illustrative of the mode of travelling of the fair ladies, from a letter from Scotland to the antiquary Aubrey, which is printed in his *Miscellanies.* The first is the story of lord Duffus.

"Upon a time, when he was walking abroad in the fields near to his own house, he was suddenly carried away, and found the next day at Paris, in the French king's cellar, with a silver cup in his hand. Being brought into the king's presence, and questioned by him who he was, and how he came thither, he told his name, his country, and the place of his residence; and that on such a day of the month (which proved to be the day immediately preceding), being in the fields, he heard the noise of a whirlwind, and of voices crying '*Horse and Hattock!*' (this is the word the fairies are said to use when they

remove from any place); whereupon he cried '*Horse and Hattock!*' also, and was immediately caught up and transported through the air by the fairies to that place, where, after he had drank heartily, he fell asleep, and before he awoke the rest of the company were gone."

The tutor of the eldest son of Lord Duffus told the writer of this letter,

"That when he was a boy at school, in the town of Forres, yet not so young but that he had years and capacity both to observe and remember that which fell out, he and his schoolfellows were, upon a time, whipping their tops in the churchyard, before the door of the church. Though the day was calm, they heard a noise of a wind, and at some distance saw the small dust begin to arise and turn round; which motion continued advancing, till it came to the place where they were; whereupon they began to bless themselves: but one of the number (being, it seems, a little more bold and confident than his companions) said, 'Horse and hattock with my top!' and immediately they all saw the top lifted up from the ground, but could not see what way it was carried, by reason of a cloud of dust which was raised at the same time."

We might mention several instances of the belief in western Europe during the middle ages, that persons doing any filthy or indecent act in the open fields often provoked the indignation of the fairies, or wood-nymphs, and were in consequence visited with some severe punishment.

There was in Greece another kind of spirits which were frequently seen by night, though but rarely in the daytime, in houses, or in caves, fields, or wells; sometimes in the shape of a serpent, sometimes of a lizard or some other reptile, and very commonly in the form of a little man, generally black. Many characteristics of these spirits re-

semble strongly those of the domestic spirit of the Teutonic popular mythology: it was in the form of a snake, that the German Heinzelmann was once discovered. They never did harm to any one; but, on the contrary, their appearance in the house very often betokened some good fortune which was shortly to happen to the family. They were called *stœchia* (*στοιχεῖα, i. e. elementa*); in the modern dictionaries we still have *στοιχεῖον* interpreted "*esprit follet.*" In whatever form they appeared, it was looked upon as a great crime to show any disrespect to them; and much more so to ill-treat them. If any person did offer an injury to one of the stœchia, it was generally followed by the death of the master or mistress of the house, and often by the throwing about and breaking of the furniture.

The following popular song, given by M. Fauriel in his *Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne*, mentions the stœchion of a river—

Κοράσιον ἐτραγούδησεν ἐπάνω σέ γεφύρι·
Καὶ τὸ γεφύρι ῥάγησε, καὶ τὸ ποτάμι στάθη,
Καὶ τὸ στοιχειὸν τοῦ ποταμοῦ κ' αὐτὸ 'ς τὴν ἄκρ' ἐβγῆκε.
Κόρη μου, πάψε τὸν ἀχόν, κ' εἰπὲ κ' ἄλλο τραγοῦδι.
Ἄχ! πῶς νὰ πάψω τὸν ἀχόν, κ' ἄλλο νὰ' πῶ τραγοῦδι;
Ἔχω τὸν ἄνδρα μ' ἀῤῥωστον, κ' ἀῤῥωστικὸν γυρεύω.

"A little damsel was singing upon a bridge,
And the bridge cracked, and the river stopped,
And the stœchion of the river himself came to the bank:
'My damsel, desist from this (mou'nful) air, and sing another song.'
'Alas! how can I desist from this air, and sing another song?
My husband is sick, and I seek a remedy.'"

In another song in this collection, the stœchion appears to

a musician, in the form of a dragon, ready to devour him for having disturbed its repose.

The stœchia were often seen playing about the mouths of wells and springs, particularly where the water issued from long ranges of caverns like chambers; which seems to have been not unfrequently the case in Chios. At the entrance might sometimes be seen a little black man, sitting and amusing himself, but molesting nobody, and saying nothing. He would nod at the girls who might chance to pass, and beckon them to him with his finger: if they came, he received them kindly, and gave them handsome presents; but if they refused to come, he took no further notice, and was not angry with them. When displeased, he jumped into the well and hid himself. The stœchion often tried to seduce beautiful maidens whom he thought worthy of his love. Some, who were overcome by his kindness, were taken by him down the well into beautiful chambers, which were splendidly furnished; before they returned they were abundantly feasted with rich food and pleasant drinks, and afterwards, as long as they were faithful to him, the entrance was always open to them. This happened frequently in a large well in the garden of Cavacus. There was another great well in Chios, the entrance to which was narrow, but it led to numerous extensive caves and vaults. At midnight, any one who chanced to be watching would see a man, mounted on a fierce horse, issue from the well, and ride furiously along the road for some distance; then return at full speed, and reenter the well. People called this man *Venia*. When any person acted as though he were insane, the common saying was Επιες ἀπὸ τὸ παγάδη τοῦ Βένιας;— *Hast thou drunk out of Venia's well?* There was a place

also in Suda, between the castle and the town, where he was said to be often seen under the form of a sow, with a litter of pigs.

"And now," says Allatius (speaking of these stœchia), "I will tell what befell myself. The stœchion was said to haunt our house at Chios, in the form of a snake. Fifteen days before I returned home, my mother went to seek something in a cupboard, when, the instant she opened the door, she saw within a snake, coiled up and apparently asleep. She immediately locked the door, went out, and related the circumstance to her neighbours. An old woman (a 'cunning woman,') told her, that in a few days the master of the house would be at home; although at that time neither my mother, nor the old woman, nor any body else, could know of my coming, for I set off very suddenly, and had not time to send them word that they might expect me. Within the number of days which she had specified I arrived at my home. Eight months after this, I was awakened from my sleep about midnight, and thought I heard something sneeze gently near my pillow; I suddenly stretched out my hand, and seemed to take hold of a snake, which instantly darted away from my grasp. Early in the morning I told our neighbours what had happened, and the same old woman said, 'You will very shortly leave us.' At this time I had not thought of leaving home, and I knew nothing that was likely to take me away; yet within twenty days I was on my voyage to Rome."

Before we proceed to a class of more fearful beings than the stœchia, or even the naragidæ, we will notice a curious superstition which our author here mentions. "About thirty years ago (he says) I was sailing from Chios to

Messana. After we had passed the promontory of Malea a sudden tempest arose, which became more and more violent, till we lost all hopes of weathering through it. While every one was expecting each moment to be his last, and I was repenting of having trusted myself to the uncertain mercy of the sea, when I might have remained quietly at home, I saw the captain, who was accounted an experienced and skilful mariner, standing at the bow, while he muttered and pointed at something with his finger. I approached, and inquired what he was doing. The old man, with a cheerful countenance, answered, 'I am breaking the force of the *fatal* wave, and am making the sign of the cross, and saying the prayers proper for the occasion.' I asked, 'Do you then know, amongst all these waves, which is the *fatal* wave?' 'Yes,' said he; 'of so many waves by which the ship is tossed, none but the ninth wave can sink it.' And as the ship was immediately driven more violently and the water suddenly beat high over it, 'This,' said he, 'is the ninth; take the number, and count on.' Strange it is, that every ninth wave was much greater than any of the others, and threatened the ship with immediate destruction. This wave, however, whenever it approached, the captain, by his muttering and signing of the cross, seemed to break; and the danger was averted. I counted about a thousand waves before the storm ceased, and I found what he told me to be invariably true."

We will now turn to the earlier part of the tract of Leo Allatius, where he treats of the *witches* of the modern Greeks. They were commonly old women, known chiefly by their poverty and wretchedness, who, since they appeared to be no longer capable of doing any service to mankind, were believed to have turned their minds to the

doing of evil. For this purpose, having entered into fellowship with a demon, they perpetrated every mischief that was likely to gratify him. By means of powders, ointments, herbs, and other such things, they plagued and injured women, and, more particularly, little children; seldom venturing to attack men. Their very breath was so pernicious as to produce quickly either madness or death. They were eager to procure new-born infants, which they pricked to death with sharp-pointed instruments. They often so afflicted a child when it was born, that ever after it remained a cripple or an invalid. Parents were, on this account, very careful not to leave a child alone during the eight days after its birth; for, by the Greek church, it was not allowed to be baptised within that period.

The modern Greeks have adopted a name apparently derived from the Latin, *strigla* (*στρίγλα*), for a witch, in common talk; but there was another name, *gelô*, or *gillô* (*γελοῦ*, *γελλὼ*, *γιλλὼ*), of older standing, if we believe the writers quoted by Allatius. This appears, however, rather to have been a hobgoblin than a witch; and it was commonly believed to wait upon women in childbirth, and to kill the infant when born, for the purpose of sucking its blood. Michael Psellus, however, in the eleventh century (a dreaming kind of writer, by the way), asserts that it is not a demon, but an old woman, to whom popular superstition had given wings, who did all this mischief. *Ἀλλ' ἤγε τήμερον ἐπέχουσα δήξα τοῖς γραϊδίοις τὴν δύναμιν ταύτην παρέχεται. Πτεροῖ γοῦν τὰς παρηβηκυίας, καὶ ἀφανῶς εἰσοικίζει τοῖς βρέφεσιν· εἶτα θηλάζειν ποιεῖ ταύτας καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἐν τοῖς βρέφεσιν ἀποῤῥοφᾷν ὥσπερ ὑγρότητα· τὰ γοῦν συντακέντα τῶν νεογνῶν Γιλλόβρωτα αἱ περὶ τὸν λεχὼ ὀνομάζουσιν.*

But we may, perhaps, form a better idea of the nature of the Gelô from the following story, two copies of which are given by Leo Allatius from Greek MSS., which, we should suppose by their language, were not very much older than his own time. It is a saint's legend, and it shows how in the East, as well as in the West, the groundwork of such legends was commonly the popular superstitions of the people.

There was a woman in Arabia, whose name was Melitené, who had had seven children, but all of them had been destroyed by the wretch Gelô (ἡ μνσαρὰ ἥτις λέγεται Γελοῦ). Melitené was near her time of giving birth to an eighth, and that this might not suffer the same fate as its predecessors, she built a strong tower, and placed in it provisions for five and twenty years; and having taken in with her two maids, she closed the entrance. Now it happened that the saints Sisinnius and Sisynodorus, the brothers of Melitené, were leading an army in that part of the country just at this time; and when the army was encamped, the two brothers rode over to her tower, and desired admittance. But Melitené refused to let them in, saying, "I am delivered of a son, and I dare not open to you." They answered, urgently, "We are God's messengers, and bring his mysteries: open quickly!" Then she opened the door, and the saints entered; and with them entered Gelô, who had transformed herself into a lump of earth, and in that shape had contrived to slip down the throat of the horse of one of the saints. And in the middle of the night she killed the child. Melitené filled the air with her lamentations, and she complained bitterly to the saints, who fell on their knees and prayed earnestly to God that they might have power over the wicked Gelô. Their prayer was

granted, and, having mounted their horses, they rode after her at full speed, and hunted her even in the recesses and caverns of Lebanon. And as they went along, they inquired after the object of their search of everything they met. And soon they came to a willow, and they asked if it had seen the hateful Gelô? but it said, "No." Then said they, "Cursed art thou, willow! and thou shalt never produce fruit; nor shall man ever eat of what comes from thee." And they went on till they met a bramble, and they asked if it had seen the hateful Gelô flying that way? and it also said, "No." Then they cursed the bramble in the same words, and went on till they came to a blessed olive; and they asked it the same question, and the olive answered, "Hasten forwards, O ye saints of God! for she is just gone down to the sea-beach." Then the saints blessed the olive, and said, "Thy fruit shall be plentiful, and the saints shall be illumined by it; and it shall give joy both to kings and to poor people." And when they came to the shore, they saw the hateful Gelô flying before them. She, seeing them, instantly turned herself into a fish; and the saints became fishers, and fished for her: and then she turned herself into a swallow; and the saints brought falcons and hunted her: and when she found that she could no longer deceive them, she became like the hair of a goat, and placed herself in the beard of the king, that they might not be able to get her. The saints, however, went to the king, and, after the usual ceremonies of entering his presence, prayed him to grant them a boon; the king swore to them, by his kingdom, that he would grant whatever they wished; and then the saints told him, that all they wanted was the goat's hair which was in his beard, and that he would see what would be the result. "Pluck it out," said

the king. The moment it was taken from his beard, Gelô, who knew it was her last shift, appeared in her proper shape of a woman, to the great astonishment and admiration of the king. But the saints, seizing her by the hair, threw her on the ground, and beat her till she cried most piteously for mercy. Still, however, they beat her; and told her that they would not spare her life unless she bound herself by an oath to injure no more the children of Christians, and unless she restored to life those of Melitené. "Then," said Gelô, "when you vomit into your hand the milk which you sucked in your infancy, then will I restore the children of Melitené." And immediately, having offered up a short prayer to God, they did so; and Gelô, "because she could not help it," restored the child which she had killed in the tower. The saints, however, fell to beating her again, till they obliged her to tell them how other people's children might be defended from her attacks. "If," said she, "you can write my twelve names and a half, I shall never be able to come within seventy-five stadia and a half." Then they made her tell them the names, which were—1, Gelô; 2, Môrrha; 3, Byzô; 4, Marmarô; 5, Petasia; 6, Pelagia; 7, Bordona; 8, Apletô; 9, Chamodracæna; 10, Anabardalæa; 11, Psychranospastria; 12, Pædopnictria; and (the half) Strigla. Then follows a long charm, the purport of which is, that certain persons should be for ever defended "from all evil, and from the mid-day demon, and from the night demon, and from evil spirits, and from the hateful Gelô."

Numerous, indeed, were the charms and spells to which people resorted to guard against the mischiefs which these evil beings were supposed to be constantly working. Amongst the most common remedies were constant watch-

ing, lamps hung in the room all night on images of the saints, and touching the sufferer with a branch of myrtle which had previously touched some famous image of the Virgin, or of some other saint. Allatius tells a story, which may perhaps be looked on as an additional example to those which have been already collected of the apparitions which have presented themselves to the imagination of people in a diseased state of body.

"When," says he, "I was not more than seven years of age, I was seized with a dangerous illness, which the doctors tried in vain to cure. Three days I had not been able to speak, and had not tasted food, and I lay in a state of insensibility. My mother went to the church of the Virgin of Loretto, who at Chios is held in great veneration, and returned with a sprig of myrtle, with which she had touched the image. Plucking a leaf, she rubbed it over every part of my face and breast, and, strange to relate, I immediately recovered my senses, opened my eyes, and saw and knew my mother. But still I could not speak; for when I tried to speak, my words seemed to be smothered in my throat. I, however, continued to watch my mother, who put the remainder of the myrtle in a small cupboard on the opposite side of the room, where there were beautiful paintings of the saints. On this I constantly kept my eyes, fearing any one might steal the myrtle, from which I had felt so much relief. In the evening the lamps on the images were lighted, so that I could still see clearly. No great part of the night had passed, when I saw come from a corner of the room two most beautiful women, in white garments, their heads and breasts adorned with flowers. Each took a leaf from the myrtle. Not long after came two others, who also took

each a leaf. And, after them, others also came and did the same, two at a time. I was distressed that what was to be my cure should be thus diminished, but still I had not power to cry out. Presently came one woman, much taller, more elegantly dressed, and more beautiful, than the others, as if she were the mistress of them all, and, not content with a leaf, she took the whole branch. In an agony of grief, I shouted out aloud, Κυράτζα! κυράτζα! 'Madame! madame!' for so children in our country call their mothers. My mother, who was awake, immediately left her bed and ran to mine. 'What ails you, child,' she said. 'Look,' said I, 'at the lady who has stolen all the branch of myrtle.' She went to the cupboard to look at the myrtle, and finding it there, said, 'Be not afraid, boy, no one has taken the myrtle: it is safe.' 'Safe!' cried I, 'when it has just been carried away by the fine lady!' 'But here it is,' she said. I would not believe it, till she took it in her hands, when all that I had seen vanished from my eyes. She came to me and said, 'What do you say? child, see here is the branch.' And she again touched my head and breast with it. She then asked me if I wanted anything. 'Yes,' said I, 'I want something to eat.' I ate and drank, and then fell asleep, and when I awoke the next morning I was well."

Allatius naturally attributes his cure to the Virgin.

The modern Greeks believed in other spirits of a noxious character, such as the *babutzicarii* (βαβουτζικάριοι) and the *callicantzara* (καλλικάντζαρα). It would seem, however, from the account of them given by Allatius, that these were but different names for the same thing, callicantzara being the more modern. The power of these callicantzara was greatest during the eight days of Christmas; and it was

believed that any one who chanced to be born during that period was so affected, that "he seemed to be born only to be the plague of himself and of every one else." As soon as the eight days came, he would rush from his own house, in a state of madness, and wander about during the night, flying with the swiftness of a hare from all who attempted to pursue him. He never rested, but with his hair rough and dishevelled, and his face wild, he fell on every one he met, and tore their faces with his long sharp nails; then, jumping heavily upon their shoulders, and grasping them by the throat, when he had nearly choked them, he asked, στοῦππος ἢ μόλυβδος; "Tow or lead?" If the sufferer answered "Tow," his tormentor instantly left him, and hastened in search of somebody else whom he might torment; if the answer was "Lead," then he fell upon him with all his might, tore him miserably with his nails, and left him half dead. When any one was known to be so affected, they tried to keep him quiet at home during the aforementioned eight days, by giving him a sieve, and telling him to count the holes in it. It was universally believed that, when the sieve was given to him, he would begin carefully and seriously to count, and, when he came to two, begin again, and so on, saying, "One, two; one, two;" and seem afraid to say three: and it was said that even if another person should suggest "three" to him, he would take no notice, but still continue repeating "One, two." Such a person they called a callicantzaros; and they had many proverbs relating to him, such as, of a person who had worn the same suit of clothes for a great length of time—*βάλε τίποτε καινούριο ἀπάνω σου διὰ τοὺς* Καλλικαντζάρους—"*put something new on, if it be only for fear of the callicantzari.*" When they saw a man who acted like

a madman, they would say,—ἐκατέβης ἀπὸ τὰ Τριποτάματα —"*you have come from Tripotamata :*" δὲν πᾶς εἰς τὰ Τριποτάματα ;—"*have you been to Tripotamata ?*" For Tripotamata was a place in Chios covered with wood, and only with difficulty accessible; never visited by men, but believed to be full of hobgoblins: and there people believed that the callicantzari assembled. People, whose children were so unfortunate as to come into the world during the eight days, held the soles of their feet to the fire, till they were so much scorched that the nails came off, and then healed them by rubbing them with oil: for after the nails were thus burnt off they could never become callicantzari.

These callicantzari seem to have resembled, in some respects, the *changelings* of our popular creed; except that, while with us they generally pine away, amongst the Greeks their diabolical natures were only exhibited after they were grown up. With both, the application of fire was looked upon as an excellent remedy. Our changelings were not confined to children born during Christmas; but it is still an article of popular faith in Scotland, that persons born at that time and on Good Friday have more power of communicating with spirits and hobgoblins than other people. Scott makes the wizard say to the king—

> "Of middle air the demons proud,
> Who ride upon the racking cloud,
> Can read, in fix'd or wandering star,
> The issue of events afar;
> But still their sullen aid withhold,
> Save when by mightier force controll'd.
> Such late I summon'd to my hall;
> And though so potent was the call,

That scarce the deepest nook of hell
I deem'd a refuge from the spell,
Yet, obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my skill.
But thou,—who little knowst thy might,
As *born upon that blessed night*
When yawning graves and dying groan
Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown,
With untaught valour shall compel
Response denied to magic spell."

(*Marmion.*)

The Greek *burculaca, bulcolacca,* or *buthrolaca,* for the name is differently spelt, was the Teutonic vampyre. When a wicked man died and was buried, the Greeks believed that his body did not undergo the same process of dissolution as other corpses, but the skin became dry and distended like the parchment of a drum; and the man's spirit, or some demon, entered into it, and at night the dead man left his grave, and walked about the streets, and knocked at people's doors, and always called by name some person in the house. If the person who was named answered, he was sure to die on the following day. Hence, from caution, it became a custom that no one answered to his name at night till it had been called twice; for the burculaca never called the same person a second time in one night. Sometimes, also, the corpse would leave his grave by day, and walk about the streets and fields, and cause great destruction. When anything of this kind happened, people went by day and opened the grave, and if they found a body uncorrupted and inflated, they were satisfied that it was the transgressor, and immediately dragged it forth and burnt it. It was the belief of the Greek church, that a body which presented these symptoms was that of one who

had died under the ban of excommunication; and cases that had occurred, with directions concerning them, are frequently found in the later ecclesiastical writers. In the Nomocanon, for instance, among others, the following passage occurs:—Περὶ ἀποθαμένου, ὑποῦ γὰ εὑρεθῇ σῶμα ἀκέραιον αὐτοῦ μὴ ἔχων τρίχας τελείως, κ. τ. λ. "Concerning a dead man, when his body shall be found uncorrupted, and entirely without hair, know that in this case there is room for doubt, whether it be excommunicated or not. Nevertheless, it is proper to take the corpse from the grave where it was found, and throw it into another fresh grave, and, after a sufficient time, if dissolution shall have taken place, it is all well. But if it be found still uncorrupted, it will then be known that it is excommunicated, and that it needs absolution, that it may be released from the bond of excommunication." The name of this imaginative monster is very expressive of ahhorrence—*βούρκα*, or *βούλκα*, signifies "putrid mud;" λάκκος, "a hole" or "ditch."

Several stories of the English vampyrès of the twelfth century are given in the twenty-second and twenty-third chapters of the fifth book of William of Newbury's History. The body of a man in Buckinghamshire left his grave, and wandered about both by night and day, to the terror and danger of the neighbourhood. Application was made to the bishop of Lincoln, then at London, who held a consultation with his friends on the subject; and in the course of the inquiry some of them told him that it was a thing of no uncommon occurrence in England, and that the only remedy was to dig up the body and burn it. However another method of getting rid of the monster was suggested. The bishop made out a chartula of absolution, the

grave was opened, and the body was found without any sign of corruption: the chartula was placed on its breast, and, after the grave had been again closed up, it was never more seen or heard of. Another such body caused a pestilence at Berwick-upon-Tweed. The body of a priest of Mailros, which wandered about in the same manner, was wounded in the shoulder by a man who was watching to drive it away; and when, immediately afterwards, the grave to which it had been traced was opened, it was found full of blood. Another had been so destructive, that some of the young men of the village agreed to go together to dig him up and burn him. They found the body but slightly covered with earth, "swoln out with an enormous corpulency, and its face red and chubby;" and so much blood flowed from it when pierced with a sharp weapon, that it might thereby be known to have been a "sucker of the blood of many."

Walter Mapes, in his treatise *De Nugis Curialium*, also gives some curious stories of English vampires in the twelfth century, which show how prevalent this belief was among our forefathers at that period.

The dissimilarity of these superstitions of the modern Greeks to any mentioned by the ancient writers, and the time at which they begin to be first alluded to, can leave little doubt of their having been introduced by the barbarians who crowded in at the decline of the empire. Their resemblance to those of which a great part still exist among the nations of Teutonic blood, seems to point at once to the quarter whence they came. We could adduce many proofs of the numbers even of Norsemen who were in Greece at an early period, had we room.

In this way may perhaps be explained a thing which has

never been very well understood. Certain early heretics were reported to meet secretly and hold horrible celebrations; all the people who resorted to them had the character of being witches and wizards, and of holding communications with spirits. If we could suppose that the Teutonic notions of their witches' Sabbath-meetings had reached Greece, the origin of the charge would appear at once. We know well how commonly the charges of heresy and witchcraft were coupled together. The particular comparison of the two stories we are not at all desirous of undertaking; but there are many points of a close resemblance between them. Some of the most curious particulars may be found in the tract of Michael Psellus, *De Operatione Dæmonum*, (particularly at page 21). Psellus, like most of the philosophers of his school, had a way of looking on the hobgoblins of the popular creed in a very serious light, and invented strange doctrines to account for them. He can tell us what they were made of, and how they ate, and in what manner their food nourished them, and even what language they spoke!

There is another circumstance, too, which seems to show the western origin of these superstitions. The later Greek writers had an idea that the northern and western countries of Europe were all infested with strange spirits. Psellus, in a passage quoted by Allatius, in speaking of the babutzicarius, mentions "a certain northern nation of barbarians, where they are troubled with many such nocturnal apparitions." And Jo. Tzetzes, the commentator upon Hesiod, who wrote in the twelfth century, met with the following curious story:—"On the beach of the ocean near the isle of Britain, live a tribe of fishermen, Franks by blood, but not paying tribute to the government. These

people, when asleep in their beds, are roused by a voice calling them, and a knocking at their doors. When they go out they find certain strange boats full of passengers. Having entered the boats, and begun to pull the oars, they arrive at the isle of Britain in a moment, although in their own vessels they cannot go over in less than a day and a night with all their sails spread. There they disembark, and land their passengers without being able to see them. And they hear the voices of those who come to meet the passengers, calling them by their names, and family, and occupations, and the passengers answering them. After which they return home as speedily as they went." We might almost suppose that Tzetzes, had he but lived a little later, had met with some Norseman, who told him the well-known story of the departure of the trolls from Vendsyssel.

There can be no doubt that Greece had, and still has, abundance of legends. Many were brought from the east by the crusaders, and a few found their way into our western chronicles. Two occur in the Chronicle of John of Bromton, both relating to the Gulf of Satalia, with the shorter of which we will conclude, because it is a curious instance of the formation of legends to account for natural phenomena: it requires no great acuteness to perceive that the worthy Grecians had seen a water-spout:—"Another very extraordinary thing happens once in every month of the year in the Gulf of Satalia: a great black dragon is seen to come from the clouds, and puts its head into the water, and its tail seems as though it were fixed to the sky: and this dragon drinks up the waves so greedily, that it swallows up along with them any ships that may come in the way, with their crews and cargo, be they ever so

heavy. And those who would escape the danger, must, as soon as ever they see the dragon, make a great noise, with loud shouting and beating on the deck; and when the dragon hears the tumult and the shouting, he will move off to a distance from them."

We may parallel with this a notice which occurs in the Chronicle of Mailros, at the year 1165:—"In the same month was a great tempest in Yorkshire; and the devil was seen by many to go in front of that tempest in the shape of a great black horse, making constantly for the sea, and followed by thunder and lightning, with dreadful crashes and terrible hail. The marks of the horse's progress were observable afterwards in several places, particularly on the cliff near Scarborough, whence he leaped into the sea, where for a full year after might be seen a great black hole."

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by C. and J. Adlard, Bartholomew Close

00083199

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 17 February, 2016